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WHAT IS TRUTH?

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WHAT IS TRUTH?

AN ESSAY IN

THE THEORY OF KNOWLEDGE

BY

ARTHUR KENYON ROGERS

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PREFACE

IN a volume published not long ago and entitled *Essays in Critical Realism*—a volume due to the collaboration of several writers—there was presented to the philosophical world a somewhat new analysis of the cognitive experience, centering about a conception to which, following Mr. Santayana's terminology, the name of "essence" was applied. Critics generally seem to have found the conception a difficult one, not wholly through their own fault. It was the intention of the writers to recommend primarily a certain empirical description of the knowing experience; and having called attention, in terms of what knowledge actually means to the knower, to one aspect in particular that had, as they thought, commonly been overlooked or misinterpreted, they preferred to leave the matter here, especially since they were by no means in agreement about the next step. Their critics for the most part have asked for something further, and in the absence of any explicit account of the more ultimate philosophical status of the essence they have, perhaps naturally, found the whole doctrine obscure. The main object of the present volume is to make an attempt to supply this lack. Unfortunately the writer has no reason to suppose that the particular interpretation here offered would find favor with his former colleagues.

I have, though with numerous changes, made use in the following pages of several articles already published in the *Philosophical Review* and the *Journal of Philosophy*.

BELIEF AND THE CRITERION OF TRUTH

I SHOULD like to be able to start off the inquiry on which I am embarking with a preliminary statement so simple and self-evident that it could be accepted by everyone. But since this is not to be expected in philosophy, I shall do the next best thing; I shall take what is to *me* the simplest and most obvious proposition I can hit upon. My preliminary definition accordingly will be this: Truth for me is what I cannot help believing. To make clear what I understand by this will perhaps take a little explaining.

I say that this proposition appears to me almost in the nature of a truism so far as it goes. Certainly that which I do *not* believe I cannot in any intelligible sense call true; this would be to empty terms of all accepted meaning. And indeed everything that I really *do* believe must for the moment come under the head of what I call the true. But the words "*cannot help* believing" are intended to limit the field somewhat; for we are engaged on a philosophical inquiry, and what we are after in the end is not anything that may *seem* true, but what approves itself as true to the persistent inquirer. If we simply believed things, the problem of truth would not yet have arisen. It is because we discover that a number

of things we have believed do not retain our belief, but turn out false or doubtful, that we set out to hunt for some standard truth which is *really* true. My statement in the first place is intended to presuppose this situation, and to identify real as distinct from mere temporary and apparent truth with what we persist in believing after doubt and inquiry—that from which we find ourselves unable to get away no matter what the sceptical temptation. For now suppose I find myself genuinely able to doubt a pretended truth—not simply to think of myself in imagination as doubting it under different circumstances; can the thing still belong to the category of the true? Evidently not; it belongs to the doubtfully true, or that about which I am in doubt whether it is true. It might be claimed that I still can determine that it should be held true by me through an act of will. But either this supposes that the doubt still persists in my mind, in which case I do not really believe it true, but merely want it to be true, or choose to act as if I believed it true; or else by my act of will I succeed in forgetting the doubt, excluding it from my consciousness. Then real belief indeed returns; but only because I have abandoned critical reflection, and have gone back voluntarily to a naïve and prephilosophic state.

With this preamble, I may go on to point out certain implications in the thesis, and thereby begin to make it more specific. In the first place, it implies that *belief* is a more fundamental concept than

truth. We need, in other words, to start with the psychological existence of a certain peculiar attitude of mind, not with a reasoned definition, or with an objectively valid standard. We experience the belief before the question of truth arises at all; and we have to go back to the fact of belief to determine whether any truth is left at the end of the inquiry. If it is not—supposing such an outcome humanly possible—then we are sceptics, and truth for us does not exist. And if, on the contrary, we still find ourselves believing, this does not mean that we have discovered standards of truth which independently produce the belief, but, rather, that the beliefs left in the field are what we have to examine in order to find in them the marks which we then erect into a standard. And even if we do not succeed in analyzing them sufficiently to elicit the standard, we should still have to hold that the beliefs represent truth. We should be in a hard case indeed if mankind before believing in truth had to wait for the philosophers to define its nature and conditions.

This leads to a second point. When I say that truth is what we cannot help believing, I do not mean of necessity what it is *logically* impossible not to believe, or what cannot be believed without self-contradiction, but what it is naturally, or physically, or morally, or practically, impossible not to believe after critical inquiry. It has been a very general assumption with philosophers that we have no such thing as truth, or knowledge, until we get what

can meet this test of *logical* certainty; and the assumption has had unhappy consequences. By setting up a goal extremely difficult to attain, if not entirely out of reach, it has tended to widen the gap between theoretical and practical truth, and has left in philosophy a general impression of scepticism quite out of relation to the concrete history of the growth of human knowledge. When we find mankind assured of the possession of a great deal of knowledge which the philosopher asserts is not knowledge at all, it would seem more modest, as well as more fruitful, if philosophy were to modify its definition in the direction of common usage, instead of setting up an *a priori* definition of its own, and then condemning actual human knowledge because it does not measure up to this. What accordingly the thesis maintains is, that the feeling of confidence, of settledness and assuredness, when this is not dogmatic, but is ready to lay itself open to all the evidence at hand, ought to be taken in the first instance as the sign that we are in possession of truth. If we actually have this, and continue after open-minded criticism to have it, in cases where the logical test cannot be applied, that means that we have no right at the start to identify the logical test with knowledge, and to demand that it must be met before we as philosophers are satisfied. If as human beings we are satisfied with less, then philosophy must accept this as a part of its data. And that men are thus capable of being satisfied is shown among

other things by the standing fact, frequently a matter of perplexity to the metaphysician, that the belief in an outer world, or in the independent existence of our fellows, or in the obligatoriness of moral law, survives with hardly an effort the most overwhelming critical assaults.

Another explanation is perhaps needed in connection with the words "for me." A certain difficulty, it may be admitted, is present here, which can hardly be disposed of briefly. But if we are willing to stick for the time being to words as they are commonly understood, it is not difficult to make all the distinctions that are immediately relevant. The most direct source of confusion is that between "truth for me" and actual or objective truth. That this may stand for a genuine distinction, I should be myself the first to claim. Purely on the ground of experience, it is obvious that at least I may have at one time a conviction of truth which afterwards I may lose. And our common interpretation goes further; it makes a difference not only between the feeling of truth now and later, but between the feeling or persuasion of truth and the real truth *now*. It holds that whatever my belief in the matter, a thing is really true or not true all the time; there is an objective truth or standard to which the personal belief may or may not correspond.

In saying, then, that truth *for me* is what I cannot help believing, I do not mean to imply that truth in the so-called objective sense is determined by my

psychological beliefs. On the contrary, in every belief there is present the assumption of a validity which does not depend on the belief itself, but on objective conditions. All that I mean is, that whether the belief is justified or is a mistaken one, every truth that we actually have up must first be believed to be true by some man in particular; and therefore, for human purposes, it is impossible to separate what is really true from what is believed to be really true, and to get at the former apart from the belief. The fact may be one way or the other, or it may be something quite different from what has ever entered into the mind of man; but it becomes a matter of human inquiry and human dispute only as it is the object of a belief. Reality, as it presents a definite content that we can talk about, is subject to all the vicissitudes of human thought about reality.

"Truth for me" means, therefore, that man can attain to a knowledge of reality, not by becoming himself identified with this reality, but only through belief about it; and while belief always supposes that it has got at the actual facts, we know that this supposition is not always correct. From such a chance of error we, as human beings, cannot possibly escape. No man, not an absolutist philosopher even, is able to get round the fact that any statements which he makes are after all *his beliefs* about things; they enter the field of discussion as reality interpreted by *him*, a private individual. Truth, in other

words, is a term that belongs primarily to the realm of human thought about reality, and had better be confined to this. When accordingly we mean to refer to the *object* of a true belief, it will be preferable to speak, not of what I have somewhat loosely called objective truth, but of objective reality, or fact. Objective truth means only beliefs that are *really* true; and since every belief supposes itself to be really true—contains, that is, a reference to reality which it assumes that it is adequately describing—from the standpoint of its own inner intention at least the word "objective" is superfluous. That the belief sometimes is mistaken is due simply to the fact that it is man who talks about truth; and man is not infallible.

The problem of the criterion of truth is, accordingly, this: What, on reflection, justifies us in *continuing* to hold to our confidence in the things we believe to be true? And the problem divides itself into two parts: First, what are the original sources of belief? And, second, what is the test which we apply to strengthen our confidence, and justify it *rationally*, when for any reason it shows signs of failing?

There are two main forms of primitive or intuitive belief—by which I mean belief that rests on its own bottom, and does not depend upon security borrowed from other beliefs. There is on the one hand intuition in the stricter sense, where confidence seems to depend on the immediate seeing that a thing is self-evidently so. This it is apparently which

gives the type of *certainty* in our thinking, and which creates, perhaps more or less unconsciously, the philosophic demand for an infallible standard. I shall reserve for another section the examination of intuition in this narrow meaning, and of the character of certainty which attaches to it; meanwhile the range of its application is obviously so limited that it can almost be disregarded in the great majority of significant problems. I may have an immediate and, it would seem, an indubitable apprehension of mathematical and logical relationships, or of the nature of the content that enters into my experiences of sensation or of memory. But the confidence that my geometrical intuitions apply to a real spatial world, or that my logical demands are accepted by the reality with which I come in practical contact, or that events actually were as I remember them, or that sensation gives me information about actual things and forces, is a confidence that must rest on different grounds. None of these last assurances is capable of a certainty beyond the reach of sceptical doubt; and our belief must therefore come from other sources.

The source is, I judge, reducible in every instance to an implicit faith in our own nature and instincts. There are tendencies in various directions which constitute what we mean concretely by "ourselves," and from whose influence therefore we cannot normally get away; and belief may be defined tentatively as just the coming to consciousness of that persistent

active direction of attention which no obstacles can effectively shunt off. In this work of influencing belief—it is to be remembered that I am for the moment considering only the starting points of belief, which must be presupposed before confidence can be either strengthened or weakened by the subsequent application of criteria—three roughly distinguishable forms may be enumerated which human nature takes; there is a confidence due to our intellectual nature, to our practical needs, and to our emotional preferences. To show that these all represent actual occasions of belief, it is only necessary to point to familiar facts.

The most fundamental condition of belief is man's intellectual and logical constitution. To think at all we have to accept our human ways of thinking. And that men do accept them, and place confidence in their own intellectual make-up, is a simple matter of fact; the sceptical argument that for all we know our minds may have been constructed to falsify reality rather than to grasp it truly, while it is incapable of logical refutation, has ordinarily not the least effect as against a healthy tendency to believe.

The second aspect of man's nature, his practical needs, also is, I take it, self-evidently a source of belief. Man can satisfy the requirements of his organism only by taking for granted, and utilizing, the physical world about him; and the strong practical assurance he has of the existence of this en-

vironing world, and of its general laws, is plainly connected with his absolute need for accepting it if he is to continue alive. There has not been so general a philosophic justification of this belief. It is not difficult to throw doubt upon it if we elect to keep to purely speculative considerations. But the fact remains that such arguments as philosophy has resorted to have entirely failed to eradicate the belief, either in the non-philosophic mind, or, it is likely, in his better moments, in the philosopher himself. Accordingly as a real and persistent belief it has to be taken account of in our search for truth.

The third source in human nature has a still poorer standing in the philosophic world; and here the philosopher gets some support also from the more cautious layman, who sees that beliefs due to emotion or desire are peculiarly liable to go astray. At present however I am merely pointing to the fact that desire and feeling do notoriously tend to carry belief in their train. And their influence is so far-reaching and insidious that even the philosopher on his guard against it does not escape. The very effort to escape has its dangers; a man will almost invariably be found leaning a little backward through his desire not to be influenced by desire. And if we really cannot escape the influence without superhuman powers, it would seem the sensible course to include this, too, in our theory of belief, and so of truth, since in so far as human nature is actually the source of belief, any ineradicable ele-

ment of human nature may be expected to play a part.

It is on the basis of this general presupposition, then, that I shall go on to raise the further and more practically significant question: How, when belief wavers, are we to go to work to give it a reflective or rational justification? It is highly important to remember once more that belief must already exist before this question can be asked, and so that there must be a first and ultimate source of truth which is prerational. But equally it is clear that mere immediate or instinctive belief is not enough for human beings. Such belief needs to be emphasized in its proper place, in view of the strong metaphysical temptation to overlook it, and to reduce everything to logic. But for our ordinary purposes it can be taken for granted. The main interest here lies in the further question: How can beliefs be *justified*, so as to separate out the sheep from the goats?

The answer I should give to this last question is the familiar one of "coherence." Coherence I think must be rejected as a sufficient definition of truth, or a sufficient reason for belief. That it is not the definition of truth I shall argue presently at length; and there is at least a *prima facie* objection to the claim that mere consistency of ideal content can safely be trusted even as a criterion, unless it is also backed by the compulsion of so-called "facts." But with belief presupposed, it does seem to be the case that coherence is the only test by which we can

justify belief to the intellect, outside the very insignificant field where intuitive certainty holds. This does not necessarily mean that we ought to abandon all beliefs that we cannot so justify. Nature will probably be too strong for us in any case. But nevertheless we do find on the whole that rational belief is the better and more satisfying sort. And so long as we play the game of reason, and profess to have passed beyond the first naïve and non-reflective stage of experience, "justification" may be taken as meaning "inclusion within a coherent system."

It is well to notice more precisely wherein this process consists, in opposition to the ideal of logical necessity. The essence of the coherence criterion is not certainty of logical deduction, but consistency of fact or experience. Mere logic never by any possibility can add more certainty to the conclusion than existed in the premises. Its ideal is, therefore, to carry back proof to more and more general premises, until at last it finds something in its own right on which it can rest, and from which then a derivative certainty passes to the consequences. The ideal of *system*, on the contrary, implies that certainty grows continually as new facts are added. The simple elements most fundamental in our system are not self-evident truths, which, as will presently appear, stop with the analysis of mental content, but, rather, those intuitions, or immediate beliefs, which are expressions of faith, since these alone lead us to reality in the more distinctive sense. But these, although

they are objects of natural belief, are not yet rationalized or intellectually justified belief. When we are led to reflect upon them—which means that their mere instinctive operation is no longer sufficient—they are seen to need a further support through reason, as self-evident truths do not. The conclusions, that is, have to be more certain than the premises. And the possibility of this depends, not on logical deduction from what is self-evident, but on a *coincidence* of evidence. In other words, when we see that two independent beliefs corroborate one another, the confidence we have in both is increased; and this is what we mean by their intellectual justification. For this to happen, logical processes are required, because to reinforce one another the two must come in contact in a connected system. But the essence of the validation lies not in the passing on of an equal measure of certainty due to the process of inference, but to the *increase* of certainty due to the confluence of evidence.

And this applies as well to the "laws" of the mind itself, or the methods which the process of verification involves, in the very general sense that, by working along the lines which these methods set, we find that we do succeed within limits in ordering the universe of experience. The probability that a special type of mind is fitted to reality, which to an outside observer might seem in the abstract highly dubious, is to us, as insiders, almost a certainty, since we approach the question already with an immense

amount of evidence at hand in the shape of successful experience. The material of experience, which in some interpretation comes to us palpably from independent sources, nevertheless allows itself to be organized; our minds approve themselves by turning out to be perfectly good tools for helping us to make our way in the world. This never gives theoretical certainty. It is possible that we may just happen to have got along so far without disaster. But we have enough for *practical* certainty. And the ground for this, once more, is to be found in the combination of a naïve tendency to accept what our nature impels us to accept, with the logical justification which this gets in proportion as experience proves amenable to our intellectual interpretations.

The justification of our practical persuasion is represented most conspicuously in the experimental methods of science. The greater the number of facts, obtained independently through the senses, which fit into the more or less hypothetical schemes of the various sciences, the stronger the confidence in, and the sense of logical justification for, these schemes. The outcome of experiment is not simply to prove that the investigator was right in expecting some particular result to turn up, though this is all it proves with certainty. His real meaning was not that such a particular future event would happen, but that the fact of its happening verifies a certain constitution of reality held to be responsible for it. Here also, to have its logical value, there must be a

belief presupposed which is to receive verification; otherwise the new fact simply happens. Fulfilled expectation would have no logical force unless there were a presumption of law prior to the mere facts of experience in detail. This presumption in its general form is given in the law of causation as a practical postulate, or an intellectual principle having its basis in the necessities of our practical nature. The world being what it is, unless an organism had, ahead of actual experience, a tendency to look for repetitions of experience, and to act as if uniformity existed, it would stand little chance of surviving. The law of causation in its scientific sense seems to be the translation into terms of the intellect of this habit of expecting the familiar. But while as a postulate, or implicit belief, it precedes experience, as a *justified* belief it gets its standing from the fact that nature is on the whole inclined to bear it out.

The most controversial side of the matter is in connection with the postulates of emotion or desire. That these do actually influence our belief is plain. That they are as real a part of human nature as the elements commonly accepted as having a right to sway belief, most people would grant is also true. Why then should there be so much hesitation in allowing them equally a theoretical standing?

The reasons are apparently of two sorts. First there is the familiar empirical fact—a part therefore of the system of our world of facts—that beliefs influenced by feeling or strong desire have, where

it is possible to subject them to verification, so often been proved to be in the wrong. And, secondly, there is the tendency which emotion shows to attach itself to matters where proof and disproof alike are impossible or very difficult, and so to evade the tests that elsewhere have been found useful in keeping belief within safe bounds. Both these facts have to be recognized; but they ought not to count for more than they are worth.

The first objection implies that the case against feeling is not *a priori*, but empirical. There is nothing in it to make us reject outright the claim of any tendency to belief which actually is grounded in human nature; the objection applies only to beliefs in whose case there are positive grounds for doubt. If we are to begin doubting wherever there is a logical chance for doubt, without regard to reasons for doubt in particular, we are inevitably on the way to a complete scepticism. We have to ask, then, why it is that emotional beliefs are so provocative of doubt; what is the positive case against them?

An answer here is not difficult. Emotion is apt to be misleading, not because the thing in which we believe is also an object of desire, but because wanting it is apt to affect our mental processes, and prevent us from looking at the facts just as they are. If emotion did not blind us and keep us from straight thinking, if it did not lead us to overlook and close our minds to uncongenial evidence, I see no special reason why the fact that the object of be-

lief is something we desire should constitute the slightest drawback. On the whole, in view of a number of considerations, it seems quite as easy to make out a case for the presumption that the universe has some favorable relation to human desires and possibilities of development, as for the opposite assumption that between our human demands and the constitution of the world there is no relevant connection. The facts are not compelling; and a good deal depends upon the attitude in which one approaches them. But an unfavorable presumption is just as truly a bias here as a favorable one, especially in view of the subtle temptation which leads the philosopher to adopt a non-humanistic preference because it is not quite the popular opinion, and so ministers a little to his spiritual pride. The real objection to the feelings is not that they are at work, but that they are at work *surreptitiously*, and so produce effects that are incalculable. The source of the trouble is not that we reason in terms of emotional objects, but that we reason in emotional ways, and so cannot get these objects in their true perspective. If therefore it be possible for a man, as it surely is to a very considerable degree, to include his own desires within the field of objects that he can examine critically without being bound thereby to adopt of necessity a blind and prejudiced attitude toward them, if he can estimate the claims of what he wants impartially and without ignoring considerations on the other side, the positive ground for

suspecting desire would have been removed without prejudging the entire case.

The remaining difficulty would be that the beliefs are capable of no further testing. Even if this were so, it is conceivable that they might still persist; however, in such a case their intellectual standing would doubtless not be very satisfactory. But at the worst this very fact of their permanence would prevent them from being left *wholly* without intellectual justification. Thus a man, without being able in any other way to give reasons for an emotionally satisfying belief, might very well justify himself at least to this extent: The very strength of my unreasoning belief, he may argue, and the fact that it persists against discouragement, is proof to me that it may be justified, though I cannot see how in detail; for whenever I find such persistency in nature, I have reason to hold that it must be rooted somehow in reality. A man has a right to this attitude only in case, again, he has not allowed desire to blind his eyes, but has actually put his belief to the hazard of the unfavorable evidence, and shown by experiment that its persistence is not merely due to its being sheltered artificially from danger. But this granted, the conditions of the rational criterion have, though in a very general way, been met. It is not simply that the belief exists. Its existence has been justified, and justified by being brought into a larger system of facts. This may not be a convincing argument by itself in a particular case. But it is in

character nevertheless a rational, and not a merely emotional, justification.

Whether we can go beyond this very general justification can hardly be answered except by considering beliefs in detail. It will be sufficient here to note that the belief in question may take either of two different forms, whose status logically is not the same. One form, and the simplest one, is this, that the world is of a nature to render the achievement of my ends or desires practically feasible. This sort of belief is clearly verifiable in the same sense that a physical hypothesis is verifiable; it is proved by actually achieving such ends. Even before the issue it stands rationally justified in terms of our existing knowledge of the character of the world, and of what therefore can probably be done in and with it; and when the end has been gained, or definitely lost, it is attested or discredited by the fact.

It is not this merely practical meaning, however, which has been seriously at issue in philosophy. What one side has claimed, and the other disputed, is not that the world is of a nature to permit the attainment in it of our human purposes, but that it has in its own character certain qualities that involve, not a mere tolerance of our preferences, but the same preferences as our own. This without question is our naïve point of view under the influence of our feelings. We say naturally, not merely that the world affords us a chance to achieve our aspirations,

but that the world itself is good, and is working toward a good end.

But even in this latter case, while the evidence may be less convincing, it does not appear to stand on an essentially different footing from that of any belief that professes to describe the *nature* of things, as distinct from empirical sequences of phenomena in particular. Even in terms of sequences, complete and final verification never attaches to the universal *laws* of sequence, which may be supposed to sum up the actual relational character of reality, but only to eventualities in the way of particular anticipated happenings. Just as, accordingly, a belief that the world is intelligible starts from a natural trust in the powers of intelligence, and is justified by the success with which progressively we bring the facts of the world into relation, or, more specifically, as a belief in the objectivity of scientific law starts from a bias toward orderly expectation, which more and more is rationally justified as events are found to correspond to the expectations aroused—otherwise our belief would not be in a universal law, but only in the particular fact expected,—so the belief that the world is good starts from our naïve faith in our feelings of value, and may equally in some degree be considered as verified in so far as the universe turns out to be favorable to the leading of the good life.

And in the same way, though with extreme caution, the possibility is open for a rational holding of

beliefs that assert more particular matters of fact, even where verification is humanly impossible. A case that naturally suggests itself is that of immortality. At the start a belief in immortality is almost on a par with the early glimpsing of ideal human possibilities in this present world—the first dim intuition, say, of a universal human brotherhood. This for a long time had to look so far ahead into the future for its verification that it could be held, like a belief in immortality, only on the ground of an inner assurance of its desirability. But the cases differ in that we should hardly hold as justified a belief about earthly possibilities which history did not show some tendency to realize, whereas immortality at the end is supposedly in the same case as at the beginning, so far as experimental verification goes. Nevertheless the other possibility remains open, and should be kept in mind in face of the popular tendency to refuse to be satisfied with anything short of verification in the scientific sense. If the belief can be shown to be logically connected with other beliefs for which ground does exist in the actual facts of experience, it shares in some degree their rational character. This is the case in science even, where a fact can be seen to follow from an accepted hypothesis. We do not feel too confident—for we know the uncertainties of our knowledge—until by experiment it has been verified. But it would be an over-wrought spirit of caution that would refuse to give it any credence. In proportion

to the certainty of the hypothesis, and the clearness of the logical connection, we do take many things for granted which we never have put actually to the test. This is notably the case with our belief in past events, which of course in strictness never can be verified.

And the belief in immortality need make no claim different in kind. If we have reason to accept a particular kind of world into which an inconsistency would be introduced through the failure of certain kinds of life to continue, the belief in immortality is in so far a rational belief, and ought not to be rejected offhand as a mere product of unreasoning desire. Verification of course is exceedingly important if we can get it, and its absence is a drawback. But it is not essential to rationality. The logical value of verification lies, again, not in the mere experience of the new fact, but in the way in which it enters into the system of reality already present in the hypothesis, and so enlarges and strengthens this. Fundamentally, therefore, it plays the same part as any other fact in the system. It gets its peculiar significance simply because it was thought out and prophesied ahead of experience; not only does it counteract in consequence our natural disposition to be satisfied with the facts we have already collected, but it is indefinitely improbable that an expectation based upon a complex reasoning process will simply *happen* to hit the future event, as it would do were not

the hypothesis already on the right track in its understanding of the world.

The position I have been taking may be summed up as follows: We have to distinguish between the necessity of a belief, its self-evidence, and its practical certainty; and it is the last about which we are really most concerned. This is a psychological state of mind, a persistent feeling of acquiescence or assent, which, if it goes along with an honest attempt to canvass the whole situation to the best of our ability, has the final word to say about what we shall regard as truth. And instead of attaching to the simplest truths, it belongs rather with the growing fulness of belief and experience. It is due to the compounding of assurance that comes from the working together of numberless facts and satisfactions, and has in it an element both of faith and of intellectual justification, the blending of the two constituting reason. In the large, the faith is faith in ourselves—in the demands of our nature and the possibility of their satisfaction. This exists prior to the facts, because our life is organic before it is intellectual, and we cannot in thinking eliminate ourselves. But we find also these demands capable within limits of getting satisfaction; and so to the naïve trust is added rational conviction. The greater the mass of experienced fact that comes within our system, and the greater the facility of successful anticipation of future fact, the more our confidence extends.

And equally it is greater the more widely it appeals to the various sides of our nature, in so far as these are approved as normal by the teachings of experience. This is why, other things being equal, a philosophy which finds a place for man's emotional needs has a better chance of survival than one which merely orders the facts of sense experience. The former exercises no compulsion whatever over a mind which is not predisposed in favor of humanistic considerations; and if the human mind generally could be counted on to take the same attitude as that of the occasional philosopher, the final success of naturalism could probably be predicted. As a matter of fact, however, naturalism leaves something out which human nature seems to want; and it is humanism which every time steps in and prevents its triumph.

Meanwhile one aspect of this thesis needs perhaps some little qualification. What it recommends is that, in opposition to the tendency to look for our most settled convictions among the simple results of analysis, we should rather turn to the comprehensive beliefs of developed human experience as our standard of assurance in the holding of truths. Roughly and in the large, I believe it to be so that "common sense" as constituted by the more massive convictions of the human race—of man in his natural habitat going about his regular business—supplies a standard of sanity which philosophy will reject at

its peril. But there are two points of interpretative caution here that deserve attention.

In the first place, I am not intending to disparage analysis in the least. It is only through analysis that beliefs become amenable to reason at all. We cannot be content to accept things simply in the mass, for that leaves no way to choose when the voice of mankind is uncertain in its utterance, or when, as constantly happens, the general belief needs modification and readjustment. But neither can we expect to get ahead by throwing over the concrete beliefs of everyday use, and confining our assent to their simpler ingredients. The path of knowledge is altogether too crooked and tangled to make this a safe procedure. It is of no avail to have, in reason, a compass, unless we know more or less concretely the goal we are setting out to reach; and there is nothing whatever to supply this goal apart from that somewhat vague and loosely articulated, but very real, *welt-anschauung*, which represents the net outcome of man's experience up to date, which passes over to the individual in the first place as a biological and social inheritance, and which in its large features has already approved itself to him in practice before he is competent to bring criticism to bear upon it, although this or that aspect of it may call insistently for revisal when he is able to interpret his demands on the world more discriminatingly. Just as we commonly think that social reform is best accomplished by taking existing social in-

stitutions for granted as a starting point, and then correcting this or that feature as circumstances may dictate, rather than by setting out to abolish everything at once and to build up society from the bottom—the latter task is too big for human powers—so in our philosophizing the only practicable method is, not to doubt universally or where academic doubt is not precluded, but to examine our beliefs piecemeal, all the time holding fast as a background to that positive nature of things which appeals to our massive and unanalyzed intelligence through its satisfactoriness on the whole, and apart from which we have no way whatever of telling whether any aspect in particular is more or less probable, except in the relatively few and unimportant cases where it is strictly self-evident.

For without a background, it is impossible we should think at all. Thinking *is* the bringing of our existing beliefs to bear upon the examination of a belief in particular; and the fuller the content of experience interlaced in this apperceptive mass, the more valuable the judgment, though the precise nature of the elements thus present may not in the judgment itself be subjected to analysis. For sound judgment, this background must have been there at the first step of philosophic analysis, unless we are to suppose that a man with positive convictions and a full experience is less qualified to perform the critical act than one whose mind approaches a jelly or a blank. Sound method therefore does not demand

that we should clear our minds as nearly as we can of all content, and allow it to fill up again only as the dialectical process advances. What determines the worth of our results is precisely the wealth of experience, partly and at the start very largely unanalyzed, lying back of the rational process. Naturally this "assumed universe" cannot be held exempt from progressive analysis and criticism. We should understand as fully as possible what we are presupposing, and why. But the criticism is rather to remove internal inconsistencies than to put on trial the conception as a whole; if we cast aside the actual fruits of experience, racial and individual, nothing remains to take their place.

A certain danger does no doubt exist here, in that the very wealth of experience may lead a man to trust his first impressions when a severer analysis is urgently demanded. And when on the other hand we once come to realize how easily unanalyzed judgments go astray, it may seem to our more sophisticated sense impossible to avoid a lurking distrust of their pronouncements. But the situation is relieved in part by a distinction. It is not that the *judgment* should be unanalyzed. On the contrary, we should use our utmost effort to see our *meaning* in the judgment clearly and distinctly, with the finest discriminations we can manage. No good ever comes of confusion as to what we intend. It is in connection with the grounds for accepting the *truth* of this intention that the vague and more subcon-

scious "total experience" plays its rôle. And although this also should, as I have said, be cleared up as rapidly as may be, it never can be entirely exhausted, while nevertheless, and even at the start, it is rightly to be trusted cautiously, under penalty of our being left without sail or rudder in a welter-ing sea of "possibilities" or of "logical entities."

Meanwhile a second point against the rationalistic or Cartesian method is, that no philosopher ever does live up to it in point of fact. You will find him all along surreptitiously bringing in the common-sense philosophy of mankind to justify his conclusions, in the form of considerations which he would have no manner of right to appeal to if he really were allowing nothing to influence him save his reasoned results up to date. And if he is to do this at all, it surely is much better that he should confess to his procedure and recognize it in his ideal of method, rather than keep it under cover.

THE NATURE OF CERTAINTY

I HAVE already called attention to the fact that the ideal of knowledge which I have been attempting in the preceding section briefly to justify falls considerably short of the demands that philosophy commonly has been understood as making. And it was recognized that, in connection with some of the simpler elements of experience, a kind of assurance is apparently sometimes possible which our more massive and complex beliefs are unable to attain, although the objects of this assurance, it was also assumed, seldom carry us very far in the direction of a working philosophy suited to our practical needs. In view of its relation to historical problems, this position needs some further scrutiny. In the present section therefore I am setting out to inquire what we mean by *certain* knowledge, and under what conditions, if any, we may expect to secure it. But since the question has more frequently been put in a somewhat narrower form, I will first consider what we mean by "necessary" truth. This last is a term which plays so important a part in philosophy that many philosophers refuse to call anything knowledge which falls short of it.

The most obvious meaning of necessity is that which attaches to it in formal logic. Certain propositions, namely, are found to involve as part of their

meaning another proposition; and the last then is logically necessary, in that, so long as we hold the premises true, and keep our meaning unchanged, we cannot possibly deny it. Practically of course we are often able to deny things that logically we are bound to accept, because we can refuse to see the identity involved. We either forget all about the premises while we are denying the conclusion, or we hold our ideas so loosely and vaguely that we hardly know just what we do mean, or we slip inadvertently into a definite, but an altered, meaning. There is nothing to prevent a man from doing any of these things if he chooses, except the fact that he thereby sets up different rules of the argumentative game from his fellows, and thus loses the advantages of success in argument. But when he really takes the trouble to realize clearly his own meaning, he finds it impossible to refuse assent to the claims of logical necessity. If he sees that the meaning of his conclusion is identical with a meaning present in what he already has accepted, he would have, otherwise, to assert and deny the same thing at the same moment; which, since assertion and denial are incompatible attitudes, is a physical before it is a logical impossibility.

So far however, to repeat, we have gone only a short way toward meeting the demands of our everyday notions of truth. For the necessity is one of inference only, of necessary *connection*. It is hypothetical necessity. And it tells us therefore noth-

ing of the truth value of the situation as a whole. If the premises are true, then the conclusion necessarily follows; but the truth of the premises must be settled on independent grounds. Of course a way might be found of deducing them also from further premises. But this process needs must have an end; somewhere we must get to original sources of belief. Granted that we have belief to begin with that goes back of logical implication, such belief may, it has appeared, be strengthened indefinitely by a logical connection with other beliefs; but without such a foundation to build upon, systematization gets us nowhere. We can add any number of zeros together without arriving at the number one. A man clever enough, and with sufficient time on his hands, might form conceivably out of the same data a great many complicated and ingenious systems, which might nevertheless all alike be totally "unreal." Somehow the system has got to be tied down by the fact of belief if we are ever to call it "true."

For the act which gives us the elemental facts of belief, it has already been found convenient to use the name intuition. The word has had various senses in philosophy; here it is intended to refer to any process which involves the immediate acceptance, in the way of belief, of some datum of knowledge which does not get its credentials through its connection with other data. Many of these intuitions, it has appeared already, may be neglected for our present purpose, since they are not to be regarded as

giving us *certain* knowledge. Meanwhile when they *are* held to be certain, they are accepted, not because they are necessary, but because they are *self-evident*. And what I mean by self-evidence, in the sense in which certainty can be held to attach to it, is this: I find it impossible, even in imagination, to think of myself as conceivably in a state of mind where I should consider the proposition open to doubt, the ground of my assurance lying within the content of the proposition itself. I add the last clause, though it is scarcely necessary. Assurance due to strong emotion or desire, which is the form of "intuition" it is intended more particularly to exclude, could hardly be brought under the definition in any case, since it is always possible, and usually easy, to imagine myself not ruled by this desire. It may be noted that this accounts as well for the lack of finality that attaches to the coherence criterion; if my confidence is due to the backing which a belief has from other and related beliefs, I shall hardly find it impossible to imagine myself not believing it. I may be unable to imagine anybody's belief refusing to be called forth provided he accepted as true all the evidence that is now before *me*. But since the assurance attaches to the belief not in its own right, but by virtue of something else, and since I can very well imagine these facts otherwise, or new facts added that would change their face, belief here cannot go beyond *practical* certainty.

Now my thesis is, that the foregoing definition of

self-evidence will be found to apply solely to judgments about present experience, or experience immediately past. This will include truths of two somewhat different orders—assertions of the psychological *existence* of states of consciousness or facts of immediate experiencing, and, for practical purposes more important, assertions that such and such is an accurate description of the intellectual content or meaning which at the moment I have in mind. That some judgments in this field can attain self-evident certainty is Descartes' starting point in philosophic method; although Descartes, by failing to distinguish sharply the two forms of judgment, and by adding to the second of them the assumption of existential import which belongs only to the first, obscured the nature of his own procedure.

To interpret this thesis a few words of explanation are called for, though these presuppose certain points whose fuller justification will need to be postponed to a subsequent section. Ordinarily we know things indirectly through the medium of ideas, or mental processes, which alone are present bodily. Physical objects spatially present to the organism are "known" only by means of their effects in sensation; and all objects whatsoever that are spatially or temporally removed are represented in knowledge by "ideas," in the narrower and more literal sense. And on such terms certainty seems out of the question, since we never are able to rule out the chance

that things not existentially present in consciousness may be inadequately represented by our ideas of them. So long as we fail to recognize this element of possible error, we may uncritically accept a belief as self-evident; and even after it is recognized we may still remain *practically* assured. But theoretically we are bound to admit that the assurance is subject to discount, and so the instance falls outside the definition. In the nature of the case this definition can hold, it would appear, only of an object of belief that is literally and in its own person present in the experiencing process, since only thus do we eliminate the academic chance of error just noted.

The possibility of such immediate acquaintance in a form to justify a claim to certainty, I find conceivable only on one showing. To begin with, if a present fact of conscious experience may not only *be*, but if also we can give immediate *attention* to it, and bring it into the focus of consciousness, it would seem possible for us to know directly both *that* it is, and *what* it is, without the intervention of ideas, and so theoretically to have the chance of being certain about it. There would be two limits to this. The first is the limit of the range of clear attention; what lies beyond this is subject to theoretical doubt even as a present fact of experience. And for sense content, at least, this may be the only limit. When a sensation is held automatically constant, or almost constant, by the continued presence

of its producing cause, we seem able to attend to it, or be immediately aware of it, at the very moment of its conscious existence. Thus if we simplify the sensational field sufficiently, and give heed, say, just to a patch of color, we have an immediate sense that while it lasts this *is*, and is just what it is, in a way to make any expression of doubt seem to us quite meaningless. In other instances the conditions which give rise to the experience are not so stable, and are interfered with by the act of attention itself; then there is a second limit. But if we can get the fact of experience on the wing in terms of primary memory, before it has had time to fade away, it still belongs essentially to the "present moment"; and certainty may be equally attainable.

There is, however, an obscurity here which still needs to be cleared up; and while it will mean again anticipating in part conclusions that have not yet been justified, what I have to say will perhaps be sufficiently intelligible. Although I have said that I may be certain under the conditions described, these conditions hardly as yet are quite consistent with the definition of self-evidence. This last implicitly involves a conception of "truth"; and, as I shall argue more at length presently, the only way I am able to define truth for myself is in terms of a correspondence between idea and reality. If then the situation is such that the object of knowledge is present in person *without* the mediation of an idea,

how can we speak of a judgment that is self-evidently true?

The point of such a criticism I should admit. Though any content of which I am aware *is* just that content of which I am aware, and is recognized as such, the "certainty" that may be a consequence of this immediate apprehension is not the bare recognition itself, but involves the *truth of a judgment.* And I should hesitate, in spite of having spoken of it as a "known" fact, to call the immediate attentive awareness of red a judgment, or a truth. It still seems to me that we can speak of a "true" judgment only where there is duality involved, and something is accepted as corresponding to an "idea" of it.

And I should get rid of the apparent discrepancy by holding that the immediately apprehended fact becomes a "truth" only when we pass a secondary judgment *about* it. In strictness, the truth is not the immediate recognition of the content, but the assertion *that* it is *as* recognized. That a given intuitional apprehension is true, means that a given description of the content is a correct one—that I was not mistaken or confused in my analysis, and so that the statement does really represent the fact; and the testing is dependent on our ability to repeat the analysis or inspection, and so scrutinize the (immediately known) fact to see if anything has been attributed to it which was not actually there. On this reëxamination, accordingly, the possibility of rational certainty depends. An introspective judg-

ment may plainly be inadequate. And therefore it should not set up too hasty a claim to self-evidence, since no untested belief, however strong, has any way of being assured that it may not be among those beliefs which *seem* to be true, but are mistaken.

And all intuitional truths capable of certainty appear to me to be of this sort. They are statements of what we actually discover to be the fact about our mental content at the moment; and they are self-evidently true statements in so far as they continue to seem with entire clearness an accurate account after repetition and the closest scrutiny we can give. Not every description of content by any means is self-evident in this sense; and there seems no way of ruling off a definite sphere within which self-evident truths lie. But in some cases the thing is so extremely clear that we refuse to admit the possibility of mistake. An element of content has usually to be relatively simple for this maximum of certainty to exist—how simple depends both on the nature of the circumstances, and on the familiarity, expertness, and mental grasp of the person judging. Of course in any case it is theoretically open to conceive that I may be mistaken in my use of *words*. But the content whose identity I am really conscious of meaning is indubitable, because the thing that I am aware of is just what it is and nothing else. If I compare a red and a green patch of color, and make about them the judgment that they differ, I feel

absolutely sure that I cannot be wrong. The judgment simply identifies a relationship at the moment present to me.

Of the two forms of self-evident intuition already distinguished, it is the one concerned with the "what" rather than with the "that" of our conscious content which is the source of the only truths particularly important for philosophy. And among these meanings or descriptions, the more significant are cases not of qualities, but of "relational" ideas. It is to this last category that, as I see it, all axioms belong, as the word has traditionally been most often understood. These represent primarily descriptive truths about our intellectual content or meaning. If I say that two straight lines cannot inclose a space, I see no ground for this except—and it is a quite sufficient ground—the immediate perception I have of the nature of my spatial experience, and the felt incompatibility between the two sets of conditions. That things equal to the same thing are equal to each other depends, again, on a direct perception of the lack of difference under the conditions specified; I cannot doubt it when I once recognize the exact character of my meaning in the judgment. Here belongs also, it should be noted, the case of logical necessity. This rests on the immediate perception that a certain matter of content is actually present as a part of my meaning in previous statements; and the "principle"

of deduction is just a generalization of the situation thus directly perceived.

If accordingly we continue to talk about the self-evidence of an axiomatic truth, it is of course essential that we confine it to these narrow descriptive limits, and do not extend its application unduly. An extension might take either of two forms—that the perceived relationship *always* holds, or that it holds *of* a reality. The first claim, when it is legitimate, depends simply upon the will to keep our meanings fixed, and allow no conditions to enter except those under which we perceive the self-evident relationships. If I discover something true about the angles of a triangle, I believe that it will be true always, and not merely in the particular case where it was demonstrated, because, since a triangle is by definition constructed in just one way, I can count always on the same circumstances as those that were essential to the demonstration; the only need I have for additional examples is to verify my conviction that the necessary conditions *are* in reality no more and no less than triangularity. I could, if I chose, adopt the same attitude toward *all* propositions, and make them universal by the simple device of giving fixity of meaning to my words. This however is puerile, and represents no scientific practice.

And it calls attention to the second point—that whenever truths profess to go beyond a description of the meaning implicit in our mental content, and to refer to things, an unavoidable element of uncer-

tainty enters in. Any assurance I may have about an independently existing world may be intuitive in the sense that it is simple, immediate, and strongly self-confident; but it can never be *self-evident*, for the reason that, as such a world never is directly identified with its description as an idea in my mind, I can conceive myself mistaken in my reference. Thus geometry is certain only while it confines itself to the abstract world of space relationships. However strong my conviction that it truly applies also to an existent world of things, this rests upon an assumption, and is not self-evident. Mill has been frequently reproved for his suggestion that two and two might possibly make five; but taken as apparently it was intended, I see nothing against the supposition. It is quite conceivable that the world might be so constituted that whenever to two things another two were added, five things would at once appear; this is in principle the sort of thing that does happen regularly in the conjuror's world. When it is a question about the way real things are going to work, then the theoretical possibility of a new and totally surprising result will always have to be allowed for.

The only thing that may seem to complicate the foregoing account is the case of so-called logical truths which appear not to be directly present in the premises, but which come as an unforeseen discovery. In formal deduction nothing new can come out of the premises; whereas in mathematics, for

example, we are constantly advancing to truths that are a surprise and revelation to the discoverer. But how could the truth be tucked away where no examination of the postulates could detect it? And if it was not there, how does it come about that I am able to make the discovery by a process that goes on simply "in the mind"?

But the true source of novelty here has appeared already. The new truths are discovered by fresh *intuitions*, and not by logic at all, though the conditions governing the exercise of intuition may be set by rules that are logical in their nature. Suppose I set out to count all the red-headed people I meet on the street, or all of my acquaintances whose names begin with A. The result may be said after a fashion to depend upon a plan of action, or "proposition," which "generates" it, while still representing a new bit of knowledge not actually contained in the "premises." But it also is evident that the act of counting would be empty were it not on the one hand for a world of reality presupposed by, but not in any sense contained in, my formula of action, and, on the other, for the specific acts of perception through which it furnishes me the material for counting. Or better perhaps, consider the novelist who, starting out with a certain type of character in mind, finds himself watching it unfold "of itself" as it comes into contact with imaginary situations. We start, say, with the assumption of egotism. With just the abstract notion to go on, and no con-

crete knowledge of the world in detail, we should stop where we began. But assuming the requisite knowledge of life, and then setting a principle of action to work under definite surroundings, in the contact of motive and opportunity new relationships are revealed, and the mind finds itself perceiving them, and following them to a conclusion that may well have been unanticipated at the start, though when it emerges we recognize it as convincing and "necessary."

And just the same thing may also take place in a more abstract realm, where intuition means, not the imaginative perception of events or happenings, but the recognition of bare relational contents. Thus the mind can operate on space qualities apart from physical experience, and by spatial constructions put itself in a position to intuit new relations. But while in a sense these are dependent on the constructive process, in another sense this process is merely a road to the independent discovery, by an act not logical but immediate and intuitive, of facts about spatial reality.

And now apart from such an assumed field of reality in the background which supplies material for new relations, have we any other source of "novel" truth? I do not know where we could possibly look for it unless it were somewhere in connection with the "rules" themselves, as distinct from the results that follow from setting the rules to work upon a subject-matter. And here there is only

one kind of "truth" that emerges, so far as I am able to get any clear notion about it. I am proposing, we will say, to build a house, and I want to get a specified number of rooms, meet certain requirements of taste and comfort, use reasonably good materials, and expend not more than ten thousand dollars. These constitute my original conditions, or "propositions," which are to "generate" the plans. And in so far as I succeed in meeting the specifications, I get a definite architectural result which is new. This however, as before, means only that I am manipulating certain material of knowledge—space demands, market conditions, and the like—in assigned ways, so as to render possible new discoveries about its relationships. But about the specifications also I discover something new—namely, their *feasibility*, or the possibility of their being actually carried through. The thing which I want to find out, and which I do not know at the start, is whether the different conditions can be combined in one concrete outcome. If they can, then I have learned that, given the nature of the world, the various propositions are compatible; whereas if two requirements—say of size and cost—can by no possibility both be fulfilled, they are said to be in contradiction. But while these are truths about the conditions themselves, they are, equally with other truths, dependent upon the nature of the material on which the conditions are imposed, and so upon intuition.

And otherwise it looks as if the supposed novelty

must always be contained after all in the premises; if we overlook it, it is because we are deceived by the complexity of the facts. We can in a complex system turn certain perceived relationships into rules of procedure, which may appear to lead to new information. Thus a library classification helps us find a book of whose location we might be unaware. But evidently here the rule is only a rule for putting one's hands upon something without a previous knowledge of which, by someone, the rule would have no meaning; it works only because I can presuppose a system which already contains all the facts, though this may be too complicated for me to hold in mind all at once.

THE NATURE OF BELIEF

I HAVE so far been using the term belief without any attempt to define its nature very strictly; and while this may seem a dangerous method in philosophy, it is one that in the present instance can scarcely be avoided altogether. No one can advance a single step in inquiry of any sort without exercising the right to believe, and without presupposing therefore that he is well enough acquainted with the experience of believing to recognize its presence, whatever his success or failure in setting forth explicitly his meaning. Even in case it were to prove impossible therefore to analyze the concept further, I should still claim the right to use it, especially since I find everyone about me using it without hesitation. As a matter of fact the term is one of which it is exceptionally hard to give a satisfactory account; but the task nevertheless is one that ought not to be entirely evaded.

It is probably safe to assume, to begin with, that the content of belief can always be put in a certain form—I believe *that* something is so and so. This may prove misleading, however, unless we notice that such a form of statement covers two possibilities that do not on the surface seem identical. It suggests in the first instance that the object of belief is a *relationship* that holds between two terms—that

green is other than pink, or that the Romans conquered Gaul. But we also may, if we choose, change the form of the assertion on occasion, and may say that we believe *in* something which is not a relationship or a "fact," but a "thing." I believe, for example, in this pen which I now hold in my hand. It is true that I am equally able to put the content of this last belief in the form of a relational proposition, and to say *that* I believe the pen is real, or has existence. But unless we presuppose that "existence" is itself nothing but a logical term or concept on a par with any other, this still leaves in some degree "belief in" distinguishable from "belief that." And it may first be asked, accordingly, whether it is a belief in "realities," or a belief in relational connections, that throws most light on the essential nature of believing.

The second alternative is the one that probably would receive the approval of most philosophers. There are two reasons however, of a general sort, which lead me to think that this is open to objection. In the first place, it proceeds on an assumption which, though it is very widely held, appears to be out of harmony with certain generally accepted facts. One would seldom suspect, from a reading of the major part of even recent philosophical literature, that belief is concerned essentially with anything except an intellectual analysis of content. For the empiricists, this content is sensational. For the opponents of empiricism it is logical or dialectical.

But in both cases alike belief has no intimate and necessary relation to the practical life, and the needs of the animal organism. It is the presumption of the objective sciences, however, that man is first of all an animal. And if this is so, the beginnings of belief will most naturally be looked for in connection, not with a disinterested analysis of psychological or of logical data out of which objects are later and in a secondary way built up, but with the recognized presence of actual things and forces on the use or avoidance of which survival is dependent. The presumption is therefore in so far not in favor of the second thesis.

There is another point against it also. It may seem an over-refinement of language to say that I *perceive* that two parallel lines never meet, instead of *believing* it. But in the field of ultimate analysis no distinction is too small to be safely overlooked. And, properly interpreted, the distinction appears to be a valid and useful one, as the discussion of certainty has already shown. Most people would admit that in the case of *certain* knowledge it sounds, on close inspection, a little strange to say that we *believe* it. We *know* it, or see that indubitably it is so; belief suggests an element of doubt which here is lacking. This carries a suggestion therefore, at any rate, that it is not to the perception of relationships that the term is most directly relevant. Meanwhile there is no doubt another sense in which the statement that parallel lines never meet does represent

a belief—when we are thinking, not of the immediate perception of a relationship, but of the projection of this relationship into the world as an ideal to which objects are going to live up. Here indeed we have the element of faith which makes the term belief appropriate. But also we have passed from the field of pure logical apprehension, to that reference to existents which is involved in the alternative conception.

It is this alternative, therefore, which I shall take as a more promising starting point; and I shall proceed to inquire what account, if any, can be given of the act of believing regarded as an essential requirement of survival. Along the lines of the English tradition in philosophy, there are two chief suggestions that will furnish a possible line of attack. There is, to begin with, what tends to be the answer of the associationist philosophy—that belief is reducible to an expectation of the future appearance of some familiar mental content. Taken as it stands, however, this is an evasion of the issue. It might perhaps account for *what* we believe. But it is not obviously an answer to the question, In what does believing as an experience itself consist? At best it reduces belief to *expectation;* and only by ruling out arbitrarily a considerable portion of the commonly recognized content of belief can this identification be maintained. And even if we were to regard it as the only form that belief takes, the essential point that makes it a belief would still remain unac-

counted for in the analysis. All that association by itself supplies is the *fact that* one content follows another into consciousness, plus the possible memory of this same connection in the past; and neither singly nor in combination do these amount to an expectant belief. Instead of finding an explanation of belief in expectation, expectation itself must wait upon a theory of belief for its understanding.

The second suggestion toward a theory of belief is a more distinctive and promising one. Made in the first instance by Professor Bain, less as itself a sufficient account of the matter than as an element in a considerably more complicated theory, it attracted general attention, only to be repudiated later on by its author. It has however repeatedly been revived by subsequent thinkers, though usually without much attempt to meet the specific difficulties involved. Here the essence of belief is found in a "preparedness to act." This has at least the very considerable merit that it abandons a purely intellectualistic explanation, and brings belief into connection with the active life process. On the other hand, in the form in which Bain left it, there is an apparent lack of identity between the theoretical analysis and the testimony of concrete experience. However close the connection with action may be—and it seems difficult to escape a feeling that some connection exists—the mere sense of active movement, or of a readiness to act, *is* not all we mean by having a belief; we have only to compare the two

things to see plainly that they are not the same. Belief unquestionably has an intellectual content which the mere feeling of movement does not supply.

It is not however impossible, it might be urged, to remedy this lack, and to import an intellectual content also into the same general situation which a "preparedness to act" implies. The defect of the alternative to which Bain himself was led—the reduction of belief to the expectation of an associated experience to come—has already been set forth. But if we were to substitute instead the recognition, not necessarily a very explicit recognition, of an *end* that is being served, or of an object felt to be related to a teleological process, we should be in some sense in connection again with the "activity" aspect which Bain tried to introduce. It might accordingly be suggested, as a possible hypothesis, that belief consists, not in movement itself, but in the intellectual recognition of the teleological situation which organic movement implies—a recognition of the presence of objective conditions, namely, such as bear a causal relationship to the expression of impulse or desire. To "believe in" a perceived object would be, then, to realize this relation of the object to the active attitude which the body assumes with reference to it.

I am disposed to regard such a thesis as to a certain extent on the right track. But as it stands it suffers from a fatal defect. In saying that I recog-

nize an object as a condition of organic activity, I am already implying that this object is an object of belief. That is to say, the content to which belief has been reduced is still no more than intellectual content, unless it be recognized not only as figuring in the logical description of a purposive situation—if this were all, I could not even have the thought of such a situation without also believing in it—but as a *reality*, an actually existing circumstance which conduct has to take into account. The moment I begin talking of "reality," however, I presuppose already the presence of belief. There must be some further account therefore of the difference between a condition of action which is merely possible or thinkable, and one that also is conceived as actual.

But while bare action on the one side, and the intellectual recognition of objective conditions of action on the other, are neither of them sufficient to describe belief, it is not impossible that if we take the two together they may prove more adequate. Action, overt or incipient, is not believing. The thought of a means to or a condition of action is not believing, since it may remain a *mere* thought. But it seems open to conjecture that the sense of difference which we feel between such a mere thought or fancy, and the belief in a real object, may have its source in the actual release of energy which marks the beginning of action. Here we are no longer attempting to reduce belief to movement pure and simple. We do not have belief unless there is also the intellectual

recognition of something that stands in relation to the process of active life. And the final touch which converts this into belief is itself also a conscious feeling. But the source of such a feeling may nevertheless be the presence of an incipient release in the direction of attainment, through the removal of organic checks to action.

An examination of the belief situation gives, I think, some plausibility to this hypothesis. As we descend in the scale of life, the release of action in the presence of the object tends to be immediate and instinctive, and the intellectual content only of the vaguest sort; here it would generally be agreed that belief is hardly a proper name to apply. As a distinctive experience, belief arises only after a period of doubt and hesitation has given rise to some recognition of the conditions to be met, and has made us acquainted with the difference between action arrested and action released. Its emergence into consciousness is at least coincident, therefore, with the removal of checks upon freely moving action; and it seems the most natural thing to find a causal relation here as well. This would mean in the first place that the source of belief is subconscious and organic—a thesis which experience will verify. We do not choose to believe; we find ourselves believing. And it seems a fair description of the fact to say that we find ourselves feeling free to pass on now to the attainment of ends which have temporarily been held up. I say that we feel

free to pass on, for, in the second place, it is in this sense of there being no hindrance in our path, rather than in the actual pursuit of active ends, that belief consists; it is a conscious and intellectual rather than a conative sort of experience, and belongs to the stage when we are contemplating rather than doing. I do not feel quite certain about the natural description of our state of mind where conduct is actually moving forward. I imagine it would often be truer here to say that belief is implied, rather than that it actually is present. But since overt action may be accompanied also by a continued intellectual recognition of its conditions, the matter is not one of great theoretical importance, and we might expect to find the situation descriptively uncertain.

In what has just been said, I am not intending to deny that there may be cases of belief which are not preceded by an actual period of initial doubt. The essential point is not that in every belief action must first be restrained by indecision, but that belief belongs to an intellectual stage which is not itself overt action, but a state of readiness to act, with the attending sense of an open path ahead. And while genetically this implies experiences of doubt and hesitation which have taught us the advantages of going slow and looking before we leap, in the human animal as he now is constituted the intellectual life has to a considerable extent severed its original close connection with experimental action, and numerous beliefs come to us from our nurture and surround-

ings which we never stop to question. Closer inspection however furnishes ground for thinking that facts of this sort are themselves favorable on the whole to the thesis that belief as a conscious experience normally implies preceding doubt and inhibition. For it is notorious that when a so-called belief comes too easily, we often are mistaken about its genuineness. It holds the mind only because we have had no occasion to put it into practice; and when we are really called to act upon it, its hollowness and insincerity are at once exposed.

THE DEFINITION OF TRUTH OR "TRUENESS"

IN the preceding pages I have constantly presupposed a certain doctrine which at the present day is widely disputed. This is the notion of truth as a correspondence between idea and reality. I propose in the present section to make an attempt to justify this more fully.

First it is desirable to be clear about what it is that the definition tries to tell us, since a misunderstanding here has sometimes, it is likely, prejudiced the doctrine. In such a definition we are not at all concerned with what concretely is *the* truth, nor with a working criterion to distinguish truths from falsehoods. Perhaps the special nature of the problem can be suggested by saying that it is a question about the definition of "trueness." Every belief, that is, makes a claim to being true; what does it mean abstractly by such a claim, irrespective of whether or not the claim is justified? Thus it does not for our present purpose make the slightest difference whether sense qualities like sound or color really belong to the physical world or not; in our unsophisticated moods we believe they do, and the question is what such a belief implies or means. What are the conditions that must be met if the

belief is to have the "trueness" which belief always assumes itself to have?

I shall begin by distinguishing four elements in the knowledge situation which an empirical analysis seems to reveal—distinctions which are perfectly easy to draw, and which all alike have enough apparent claim at least to stand for facts, to put the burden of proof upon the one who shall reject them. First, there is the object perceived, the real thing with its status in the world of reality independent of the knowledge relation. This various traditional theories of knowledge have persistently tended to ignore or to deny, but evidently only at the cost of a sharp break with normal human belief.

Over against the object stands a second fact, which common sense also in the past has been accustomed to accept, and to think of as an independent and—in a specified sense of the term—subjective entity, belonging to the realm of psychological experience—the "state of consciousness," or the psychical state, as an existent. Here again we have a sort of fact that is nowadays not universally admitted; and it will be a part of my task to defend it, incidentally, against the current disposition to extrude it from the universe. But meanwhile I find no excuse for anyone pretending that he does not know what the phrase is meant, at least hypothetically, to stand for. It may be identified summarily as that which constituted the whole stock in trade of the traditional English introspective psycholo-

gists—the bits of psychological stuff into which it was their business to analyze the conscious life.

About the next point there is more excuse for misunderstanding; but recent philosophy in particular has made some sort of a distinction here a commonplace. It concerns what in familiar language may be called our "meanings" or "ideas." A real possibility of confusion lies in the fact that "meanings" have two different aspects, which it will be one main purpose of what follows to try to adjust. On the one hand, a meaning is distinctly "our" meaning; it belongs, that is, in *some* sense to the realm of psychological experience. We talk about our "ideas," in the sense of the traditional psychology, as events in the stream of consciousness with a particular existential locus. But on the other hand a meaning, from a different angle, does appear to have a non-psychological objectivity. It is always on the point of breaking loose from its local embodiment in the psychical series. When we subject it to ordinary psychological introspection it tends to elude us, leaving us simply with the "image"; and between the image, a plain psychological existent, and the meaning, there is, however close the connection, no identity. Indeed the meaning seems to belong rather to the object than to the image; it is the object's nature, or "essence." Or it may even claim a status as a timeless entity, inhabiting a logical world of its own independent of any attachments; thus we may speak of it as the "same" meaning no matter who thinks it,

and no matter to what particular object it is referred, or whether it is referred at all.

The fourth distinction is that of the "mental act." This is a concept confessedly obscure. But whatever the interpretation, it seems tolerably clear that there is *something* for which the expression stands, worthy of entering into a complete analysis. Without an element of "activity," we do not get the complete fact that experience seems to present; psychological states become a bare disjointed string of Humian bits of mind stuff, and "meanings" an unchanging skeleton world of logical abstractions, or Platonic ideas.

There is not intended to be anything abstruse in the foregoing analysis, and if there has seemed to be, I can perhaps dispel the impression by translating it into a concretion. I recall or think about my dinner of yesterday. Here there is, first, the dinner itself, an actual experience of eating which is now past and done with, and, therefore, not now to be discovered as an actual presence. The ideal content of this past experience however, its "character," or "nature," or "essence," *is* present for me now in the focus of my attentive consciousness as an idea or meaning. Distinguishable from this, again, is the imagery which may be said somehow to "carry" the meaning—a species of psychological fact which differs from the latter in that I am unaware of it at the moment of remembering, but which examination reveals as actually having been present, whether as

visual, gustatory, verbal or what not, being relatively unimportant to the significance of the memory itself. And, finally, over and above all these aspects, singly or collectively, is the fact that *I am remembering*, or the "act" of memory. There may be a reasonable doubt about the interpretation of some or all of these aspects. But that each of them stands for *something* that the plain man can easily identify as a part of, or as directly involved in, the total fact he is familiar with as the thinking of a past event, I do not believe can fairly be disputed.

I am now in a position to state in a preliminary way what I consider to be the nature of an act of belief on the side of its claim to truth. And as perception is the original form of that which takes itself as knowledge, and is, besides, the storm center of the epistemological controversy, it will form the natural starting point for the inquiry. Perceptual experience, then, is a process of recognizing, implicitly, a certain character or essence as belonging to an object, or to a real existent. This existent is something not itself immediately apprehended; it does not enter literally in its bodily presence into the flow of direct psychological experience where knowing is located. The real chair which I see, no more than the real dinner which I remember, is identical with anything that at the moment is an "experienced," as distinct from a "known," fact. For one thing, if in knowledge the actual object were literally inclosed within the experience which

knows it, it would be bound in so far to exist precisely as it is known, and error would be impossible. Consequently, as opposed to subjectivism, the "existence" to which knowledge refers must be postulated as having a life of its own, untouched by, and existentially independent of, the knowledge process.

On the other hand the specific dress—the complex of qualities and relations—in which for knowledge the object is clothed, *must* somehow be immediately grasped, or intuited, or apprehended, or given. The true object of knowledge cannot accordingly be understood except in terms of an intimate union of two aspects. In its construction we have to distinguish two separate processes or phases—the apprehension, or direct presence in psychological experience, of the character or essence which describes it, *and* the outgoing reference which locates this as an attribute of an independently real world. The fundamental defect of neo-realism—and, I believe also, of objective idealism—is that it stops with the character apprehended, and so turns existence into logic—a complex of attributes or "data." In point of fact what we do when we "see" an apple is not merely to have a complex awareness of redness, roundness and the like; this redness and roundness we feel as *really existing* out there as the qualities of an actual "thing," where the thinghood or existence is not itself reducible to apprehended characters of which we are aware in the same way that we are aware of redness. On the other hand, the neo-

realists are unquestionably right in holding that these "characters" are truly objective, in the sense that they are not sensations or mental states. An apple is not a collection of my sensations and images; nor do I attribute sensations to it as its qualities. At the moment of perceiving, no reference to the mental is present to my mind at all. The content which specifies or describes the particular kind of reality I am in contact with is a complex of purely abstract, logical, and therefore non-existent entities; it is made up not of red and round sensations, but of *redness* and *roundness*.

And yet from a different standpoint subjectivism also has something to say for itself. For while it is so that in the description of the known object there is no question of a red sensation, it does not follow that we should have it in our power to see redness in the object, were it not that actually physical processes have given rise to red-sensations in our personal experience, so that we can somehow utilize such "mental" facts to make the knowing process concretely possible. This, as I have said before, is what in appearance at least we find to be the case. And I propose to go on now to inquire just what such a claim will involve. More specifically, I wish to consider the exact status of a "meaning" or an "essence," and what its relation is alike to the object, and to the mental state.

I have said that an essence is not as such an existence. It is rather a *description;* and we do not

refer existences to the real world as its describable "character." But then what does constitute its metaphysical standing? I see here only two roads open. On the one hand this status of "non-existence" may represent an ontological fact, in the sense of something like a realm of Platonic ideas. To this, with its hypostasization of logic, neo-realism seems inevitably to swing. Or else non-existence is purely a mind-made fact, and depends upon our human power of abstraction.

This last is the road which, in so far at least as the knowledge situation is concerned, I prefer to follow. The "character" of an object is not an existent, simply because we have left its existence out of account in thinking of its bare descriptive nature. There seems no particular difficulty so far; all we need to postulate is the power to lend attention to partial aspects of experience, and ignore for our selective thought the rest. If we were asked how we arrive at the description of an apple, for example, assuming now the "apple" as a part of the already accepted world of real things to which we react, we should naturally say that we note by the abstracting eye the redness of the apple, the taste, the shape, and, ignoring the fact that these are embodied in a particular existential form, we hold them before the mind in their own right just as characters. They really do, for our naïve belief, belong to the apple, exist there—that is why we can reassign them to it objectively as its very nature. But also we can think

them as qualities without at the same time intending to think of any particular instance in which they really inhere.

But while the status of the essence in so far is not particularly abstruse, whether as embodied in the object, or as attended to in abstraction from it, its connection with the process of *perception* is more difficult. For a point of view at any rate which accepts a real difference between psychical and physical existence, the presence of the essence in the knowing experience cannot be accounted for merely in terms of its existence in the object, without abandoning the whole distinction between the real world as existing and the world as it enters into the knowing state—without leaving out, that is, the human fact of knowing altogether. We have to find, accordingly, an embodiment of essences not in things merely, but in connection with the human knowledge of things as well. And such a point of attachment has already been recognized in the preceding analysis; *somehow* they are "ideas of ours," which we can hold before the mind and attribute on occasion to various "things." I have however granted the impossibility of simply identifying this meaning with the psychical state; what then are we to take to be the relationship between the two more or less discrepant facts?

The simplest answer seems to me to be the true one. The sensation is actually there as an existent psychical fact, though we are not aware of this at

the time, and it is not the sensation as such that we refer to the thing. But the sensation also, like the object, has a certain character, or an essence. And as, in viewing an object, we can ignore the object's existence in favor of its qualities, so when we have a sensation it is possible that, without any reference whatever to the fact *that* we have it, or to its existence, our attention may automatically be held by certain special characters attaching to it, which we use then for interpreting the extra-experiential object in which on other grounds we have reason to believe. And this, I suggest, constitutes the experience of cognitive perception, and explains the ontological status of the essence in human belief. Of course the same explanation would equally apply, with modifications to be noted later, to non-sensuous knowledge, where the "image" would take the place of the sensation.

Before going on to justify this thesis more at length, it will be well to say something first about the other aspect of the knowing process that has been distinguished, for the sake of getting the entire situation before us. And for this it is only necessary to turn to certain facts about the human constitution which are a matter of general acceptance. The foundation of essences in the knowing process has been located in the variously qualified psychical experiences—color sensations, sound sensations, and the like—which arise in connection with the action of the outer world on the organism under specifiable

conditions. That undulations set up by a vibrating body, and impinging on the sense organ, condition thus the appearance of sound sensations not identical in character with the physical changes in the nervous substance, is to be accepted because we find it to be so.

These qualitative effects, however, may as such be called passive; and if they stood alone they would not constitute knowledge at all. They would be no more than transient pulses of psychic existence of which one could only say that they *are*. But the organism has another and more aggressive side. It is constituted by outward-going impulses, which need for their expression the material of the outer world. And this relationship of active tension in which the organism stands to the world which it finds only indirectly amenable to its own purposes, is the immediate occasion for that which translates itself into the inner life as a reference to, or an acceptance of, a real extra-experiential universe of existents. It is not that we reason to, or infer, such a fact beyond experience. The belief is rather an assumption which we make by instinct, since it is only by taking for granted that we are in relation to realities on which the needs of life depend that we are able to maintain ourselves alive at all. But also we do not simply *react* to this world; we have an intellectual or conscious recognition of its being there, as something to be taken into account. The nature of this situation has already been considered briefly in what I have

had to say about belief; and I shall return to it again a little later. Meanwhile that it is *somehow* in connection with the life of organic impulse that the reality reference arises seems to me, in the light of all we know about the world, hardly to be open to reasonable doubt; and an account of knowing which ignores this, and which tries to derive all that is essential in knowledge out of intellectual or non-practical conditions, is necessarily doomed to failure.

If however, to return now to the earlier point, we are to come in thus for some practical benefit, it is not enough that we should merely recognize reality in general; we must find reality clothed with certain specific features, in case our recognition is to help us in adopting the action appropriate to any situation in particular. We must, that is, qualify reality by distinguishable predicates. And we have no material whatever for this purpose, except in the form of those characters which we directly experience, ultimately through the effects that outer objects exert upon the organism. We cannot characterize existence except in experienced terms, which means in terms of the essences of our experienced psychical feelings. And if on certain occasions we are led to react at the same moment that we find ourselves experiencing a sensation of redness, why should we *not* automatically characterize the existent to which the reaction points by redness, and so have a mental tool for future discriminations in conduct?

This, again, distinctly does not mean that we first

recognize the psychical state as an existent. Rather what is presupposed is, that while the psychical state *is there* all along, all that comes to the surface, rises to our attentive consciousness, is one or more of its essences; for attention these are given *apart from* the fact of their psychical embodiment, which last can only be noted by a second introspective act of knowledge. Normally and originally—for until it happens we have no case of knowledge at all—these essences are present to our awareness, or are "given," as descriptive not of sensation but of an independent object, the recognition of the object being due once more to the practical needs of life, which force us to take account of what we find affects us for weal or woe. An "object," therefore, is constituted by a group of the characters with which psychological experience makes us familiar, *plus* the instinctive sense that there is something present of which we have to take account, the latter aspect being an outcome of that state of muscular tension which is conditioned by our nature as active beings dependent on an environing world, while the characters are used, also instinctively, to give to this a specific form. Meanwhile the essence *as such* is the product of our later moments of reflection when we abstract the nature of the object from its existence or thinghood—the two things being originally given in conjunction—and direct attention to this just as an essence, or abstract character, or universal.

It is here, I may note in passing, that the ground

exists for the conclusion that true knowledge is in terms of "correspondence." This character of the psychical state which the mind "intends" in its ideas must really be identifiable with the character of the object to which it is referred, or else in so far our knowledge is in error; and if the essence in the two cases is identical, the things which have such an identical essence "correspond." In this way we may answer the familiar objection that if by definition an object lies outside experience, there is no method of getting hold of it to compare it with the mental state, and so to discover the correspondence. Correspondence is *discovered* not in the original act of knowing, which is a unitary act of reference or identification, but through a subsequent reflective thought, to which both the terms alike are on the side of their *existence* external; but also both object and mental state alike are now present in *idea*, that is, in their essence, and so can be compared. This of course still leaves the claim to correspondence without any final testing; but the *claim* nevertheless remains as a verifiable part of any natural account of knowledge, with an origin which it is possible to trace. If accordingly we wish to say that our ideas "copy" the real world, we must be careful not to imagine that there is an original in knowledge which the idea then sets itself to reproduce; it *is* a copy if it is a true idea, but it does not do any conscious copying. Meanwhile the connection with reality which belief presupposes is not dependent on a rec-

ognition of this correspondence. It is direct and instinctive, and a consequence of the way in which, not reality merely, but reality localized and particularized, is forced upon us by specific practical needs under specific conditions of their satisfaction.

In terms of specific qualities of sense, at least, I think that the foregoing account of the relationship between essence and mental state is sufficiently simple not to need further laboring; and it seems a perfectly natural and plausible conception. Evidently a "red sensation," as a psychical existent, is neither identified with the red object, nor attributed *to* the red object as its quality; it is *redness* we find in the existing world. But how could we ever have the meaning "redness" before us unless we had somehow *experienced* redness as the quality of an actual psychical state? However, if we pass beyond this simplified situation the matter, I recognize, is not quite so plain; there are a number of explanations that seem called for.

To introduce the first of these, I shall find it convenient to call attention to begin with to certain distinctions involved in the term "meaning," which I have been using as an alternative of "essence." The first distinction is that between meaning in its active and in its passive sense—between *a* meaning in the mind, and *having* this meaning. Here the only question has to do with the descriptive nature of this *act of* holding a meaning before the mind. I have interpreted it as an attentive awareness of, or as

attention focussed upon, a specific character present as a character of the momentary psychical state.

There is however a second and quite distinguishable *active* sense attaching to the word. The meaning *which* we have may also be actively *referred to* an external object; and then we may talk, in this new sense, of "meaning the object," and not simply of "having a meaning" present in our minds. Both the meaning which we have, as a particularized content, and the act of attributing this content to something as a true description of it, are equally involved in the present theory in an indivisible unity, and they must, as was said before, be united to get the complete object of knowledge which we "mean."

It is a third ambiguity, however, that is chiefly important for my present purpose. It is illustrated when we speak of the meaning of a word. This without doubt is largely responsible for confusing the claim that for true knowledge, when this professes at all to be concerned with the *nature of reality*, an idea must be an adequate "copy" of the character of the thing. There is no such correspondence where a word is concerned. It is merely that we find it useful to simplify our thinking processes by substituting for the various characters of reality arbitrary signs. And the sign system may, without correspondence, be "true," in the sense that we can substitute it in our calculations and still find the result coming out correctly. And this symbolic usage is not of course confined to verbal signs. Alike in terms

of thinking and of conduct, whenever it is some practical outcome alone that interests us, *anything* that will enable us to reach our goal may serve to carry our meaning, and so in a sense constitute valid knowledge.

And even apart from the use of arbitrary signs, it is evident that between the meaning and the mental state or image there need be very little similarity; there may even be a sharp discrepancy. I *see* a round table as round—roundness is a part of its essence; my image meanwhile may have the essence "elliptical." So perceived distance—belonging to the object's essence—may be represented in the analysis of the mental state by characters far removed from its real nature. And, on the negative side, imagery is notoriously almost certain to be minus a large proportion of the characters belonging to the meaning which we think.

In general, the explanation is that the presence of meaning in the active life—of thought or of conduct—is largely a sense of definiteness in the direction in which we feel ourselves moving, an assurance that we are on the right track, and will come out at a point where some specific experience will greet us as winding up happily and successfully the active process. This might possibly account for such a thing as "imageless thought"—as the irradiation from a moving equilibrium whereby felt relationships give rise to a tingling sense of terms which will complete them, even before these arrive in person on the scene.

But it is not necessary for me to present an adequate psychology of meaning—a thing which I am far from professing myself competent to do—since for my particular purpose the question is a relatively narrow one. Whatever the symbolic function of the mental state, falling short of correspondence, the moment we come back to the special aspect of knowledge in which alone I am now interested, and consider knowledge, not as a technique for attaining practical or theoretical ends, but as an attempt at a mental reconstruction of the *true nature* of anything, we find the notion of correspondence inevitably cropping up again. We can use words, when our meanings are sufficiently fixed and we are become sufficiently sure-footed, or we can use any other form of substitutory image, without stopping to realize to the imagination the concrete realities for which they stand. But when we do stop to *realize the meaning* of our words, and think not of the practical end that thought for the moment is interested in reaching, but of the real character of the world with which our thinking deals, we are led to recognize that we have no proper imaginative realization of the meaning of the symbol unless we are capable of translating it back into the concrete fact of which it is the sign.

And an idea is in *this* sense true, or enables us to think the character of the object truly, only in so far as it has itself the characteristics of the thing to which it professes to refer. In some cases this seems

to me so evident that I hardly know how to enforce it. Suppose I am trying to think truly the character of a previous sense experience of redness. Unless I can call up an image whose redness is equivalent to the previously experienced redness, or can get a new sensation of the same kind, to that extent I fail to have any realizing sense of its qualitative nature, in the state of mind in which I am just, as we say, "thinking about it," though the defective image may still serve the purpose of directing me in the sort of conduct for which its object calls. Or if I try to "think" another man's feeling of fear, I only succeed in knowing the qualitative "fear" essence in so far as I am able to use, directly or indirectly, in "knowing" it, a similar concrete experience of my own, which embodies in itself the same quality I need to have before my mind if I am to attribute it to another.

And the same situation holds of beliefs about the nature of qualities attributed to an outer world. Whether or not redness really belongs as a character to things, the very intelligibility of the dispute itself is bound up with the thesis that I have had an experience characterized by the quality of redness, and that, alike when I assert and when I deny, the experience thus qualified, bodily or in a reproduction, is implicated in my judgment, the identity or lack of identity of *its* quality with the character of the real thing being the only point at issue. When we turn from sensations to relationships, I grant in-

deed that the situation is hardly so straightforward; what I find to say about this very difficult matter will have to be postponed a little until I have a chance to deal with relationships more explicitly. Meanwhile on general grounds it is hard to avoid supposing that the essential thesis is true of *every* character attributed to the real world, relationships as well as qualities. Unless the relationship can be translated into some *relational experience*, the word is seemingly left devoid of meaning; and apart from the supposition that just the character thus represented attaches somehow to the real world itself, we should have no ground for claiming that we know the relational structure of this world at all.

That the *total* image is usually a long way removed descriptively from the essence of the object is, I repeat, undoubted, except perhaps for those whose type of imagery is notably concrete and realistic. And if "copying" needed to mean a photographic reproduction, here would be a point against the copy view of knowledge. As a matter of fact this apparently is presupposed in some of the common objections brought against such a theory. The total nature of the image is however usually irrelevant. On the practical side, as has been said, it makes little difference what the image is like so long as it carries us ahead; and even when we are bent on stopping to realize concretely within the mental life itself the true nature of the reality about which we are thinking, we shall most likely be compelled,

provided it is at all complex, to take up its various characters point by point instead of as a whole. All that correspondence signifies is that any particular feature whose true nature we are to realize concretely must be "embodied" in a psychical state, whatever the total description of that state may be; we find ourselves balked unless, by reviving an image, or repeating an original experience, we can actually get in experience the quality we are wanting to assign the object as its nature. When for example we begin to scrutinize perceptual qualities like distance, we are likely in the "mental state" to discover at first no element "corresponding" to distance. But if we really insist on realizing what we mean by distance, we shall nevertheless find this out of our power except as we are able to appeal to actual experiences—perhaps of movement—which in themselves possess characters that give intelligibility to the term.

I may pass now to a second and more technically significant qualification of the statement that in true knowledge the essence of the object and the essence of the mental state are—potentially—identical. Both object and mental state have, *as existences*, certain characters which can be compared either not at all, or only in a carefully qualified sense. For since as existents the two are sharply distinct, whatever belongs to one by virtue of its separate existential identity it will be unsafe to transfer to the other. Thus the fleeting character of the image does

not belong to the—in most cases—more permanent character of the thing. And more particularly from the other side—that of the object—does this need to be recognized in order to evade certain plausible objections. Thus it might be asked, for example, whether a thought of the infinite is itself infinite, or whether the thought of an object independent of experience is itself thus independent. But this would be to forget the very distinction between existence and essence on which the theory rests. Of course the idea does not have *the* existence which belongs only to the object, nor is it able to *perform the acts* which the object by virtue of its reality is able to perform. We can consistently say that the thought of activity is not itself active; the idea of running does not run. But why? Simply because running is an occurrence in the existing physical world, whereas only the timeless essence of this world is taken up into the idea. But on the other hand, we could have no idea of "running" apart from some actual experience of running in the past, which now is utilized in imagination, and its descriptive characters attended to.

So if the complex character of "infinity" implies also an aspect of actuality, we should have ground for admitting that in so far the *idea* of infinity is not infinite, though this idea might still embody the "essence" infinity, and be impossible were it not that the essence had actually qualified experiences of my own which I can draw upon for purposes of thinking. If we were to define infinite time, for example,

in the traditional way, as time which goes on without ever stopping, it would not be necessary for our thinking this that the thought also should go on without ever stopping. It is not required that the thought should *do* the things that its object does. But if I had not had experiences themselves characterized by continuance and by stopping, as well as the experience of finding one sort of event not the same as another, I should certainly be unable to think the possibility of a "continuance that does not stop." The same distinction relieves a difficulty that might be felt about simple sensational qualities. If I say that a certain state of mind "is red," this seems paradoxical only when we interpret "being red" to mean, "that which would *appear* red to an organ of vision," or "that which has the *power of producing* a sensation of red in an observer." This last phrase however would itself be meaningless if we had not had experiences themselves characterized both by redness and by "causality," though I grant that what the nature of this causal experience is philosophers have not been very successful in describing.

There remains one final point of great importance for the theory. In order to be able to think meaning apart from existence, existence also must stand for some definite aspect of reality, as I have throughout had occasion to urge that it does. But a theory of existence offers very considerable difficulties. And one of these in particular the preceding account of

essences makes it impossible for us to overlook. I have held that we can, and do, abstract the character of a thing from the existence of this character in the concrete thing. But in that case, it might be asked, is existence itself an essence, or is it not? If it is, then it is as abstract as any other essence, and existence itself would not exist. If it is not, then how can we think or mean it, since everything we are able to think must be reducible to an essence before it can get into relation with the mind and knowledge, and take on the form of an "idea"?

I may get round to a consideration of this by starting with the reasons that justify us in speaking of existence at all, in a sense that goes beyond the categories of logic. These reasons cannot themselves of course be primarily logical ones; and for the philosopher this fact has very often been sufficient to discredit them. But for the natural man in his normal moments they are quite compelling. Consider the physical world. It is almost to be sure a commonplace nowadays with an influential group of thinkers, that force is no more than a formula, and a thing no more than a law. And it is hard to eradicate this opinion by argument, partly because, for the special purposes of the scientist, energy *is* a formula. His whole aim is to reduce it to a shape that can be set down in a book and used in calculations. And he has accordingly a strong disposition to think that when this is questioned as an ultimate truth, the objector is simply trying to reintroduce

mystical and incalculable elements into science. But if one is to feel the real force of the issue, he would do better to take a point of view outside the special scientific interest, and closer to that of his everyday affairs. Let one imagine himself, for example, engaged in a life and death struggle with any of the great forces of nature—a tornado or a raging torrent; can he still genuinely confine his belief in nature to a set of equations, and resist the *practical* persuasion that there are real things and real forces that are existences beyond him, and that set active limits to his self-assertive will? I shall not deny that the thing can be done. But for myself I cannot manage it; and in this I am pretty well assured that I should have the general judgment of mankind with me.

Apart from nature, the other sort of existence which we usually suppose ourselves to know is that of psychological or conscious stuff. And while this stands on a somewhat different basis, here also I know of no way to meet the claim that consciousness does not exist, but is just a relationship or a function, except by putting oneself in a certain situation, and noting in what state of belief it leaves us. And the situation is, once more, not that of the scientific psychologist attempting to set forth the laws of his science, but that of the plain human being. Consider, then, the experience of having a vivid color sensation, or a painful toothache, or a compelling emotion. That there is existence here, stuff, brute

fact that cannot be resolved into relations, or activities, or any of the philosophical devices for saving the ultimateness of dialectics, is to me a result from which I find it utterly impossible to get away.

If now we attempt next to ask ourselves just *what* it is we thus recognize as existence, we shall discover that of the two sorts of reality—the physical and the psychical—one is less fitted to suggest a final answer than the other. It seems—to me at least—self-evident that the fundamental stuff of existence would have itself to become a part of immediate experience before we should have any chance of getting at its own ultimate being directly, though without this we might be able to think its abstract "characters." If then there does exist an independent world, capable of being known by human beings, but not entering bodily into their inner life, it follows that we cannot possibly discover immediately, or apart from inference, the nature of its "isness," but can only describe this in terms of some essence which it shows.

Such an essence is embodied in a familiar human judgment as to what it is we mean by an "existent" thing; a thing really exists when it *has consequences*, and so has to be practically reckoned with in our conduct. And for ordinary purposes I think that such a definition is roughly adequate to our meaning. It is true, as I have said, that a statement about what existence *does* fails to tell us directly what existence *is*. And it is not even a full account psychologically

—as indeed no mere cognitive formula or "essence" could possibly be—of the actual *sense* of reality which we feel when in its presence. For this last we need to turn again to the organic mechanism of belief which has already been described. In believing, we do not have to do with essence merely, but with actual physical tension and release; and it is this apparently which lends to a situation that flavor of reality which "mere" ideas do not possess. But this still fails to meet our needs completely; it supplies no content to the notion of existence itself, though it may account for our immediate feeling of its presence. And whatever the conditions under which we recognize existence, and the nature of its relation to ourselves, we cannot readily ignore the further question, Must there not be some reason *why* certain entities are thus big with consequences, while others are ineffective? And it is difficult to find language to express the nature of this reason, that avoids speaking of the one instance as existentially more real than the other.

There seems no chance of satisfying this ultimate demand, until we turn from the physical world to existence in another form. Nothing in the preceding account, to repeat, really tells us what existence *as such* is; it does no more than point out a character—in terms of the "causal" relationship to specific human experiences—that will enable us to detect whether or not existents are present in the neighborhood. If we are to be able actually to catch exist-

ence on the wing, it must be on condition that it is present bodily, and not merely revealed through its effects; and this is only conceivable of a sort of existence that comes *within* psychological experience, and is not simply "known" indirectly through the *medium* of experience. I have already maintained that we do actually find such an existent fact in what traditionally has been called psychical, or psychological, or conscious, or experienced being—feelings, sensations, and all the rest. And here accordingly the particular logical difficulty which I started out by raising cannot be longer evaded.

Granting, then, that in the psychical fact we are directly in contact with existence, and that we can somehow talk about and therefore think it, is this existence an essence, as red is an essence? I do not find that it is. There is no distinguishable content, having form or quality of its own, that I seem able to hold before the mind as a meaning to indicate what the "existence" of a mental state is, as distinct from the "what" or character *of* its existence. This is why it is so easy for the philosopher to persuade himself that no "isness" remains over and above the intelligible characters of reality—its logical description. The *being* of the psychical fact is not redness, or tonality, or spatial extensity, or any qualitative term that I can name; nor is it all of these together. But neither are we forced with the neorealist to hold that therefore all these characters are reals in themselves, which have in experience no in-

herent connection with the psychical; red as a sensation may be, as it seems to be, just one particular form of psychical stuff. For I see no logical reason why existence may not need *some* character in order to exist, or why it may not have any number of *different* characters, all equally real. This "existence" cannot be described; but I can point to it as an immediate revelation of experience, and say: Consider a painful feeling, or an emotion of fear, or a sweet taste, or a living memory, and see if you are not forced to recognize, over and above any terms in which you can describe the distinctive *quale* of these experiences, the sense of the actual living presence of the qualifying adjectives, not now as an abstract description, but as the very stuff of inner experience itself, a fact of life and not of logic.

And if now I am asked again, How, if this has no specific content, can you think or mean it? the best I can do in way of reply is to say: I cannot indeed mean it in the sense of having it as a specific meaning before my mind, comparable with red as red is comparable with blue. But I can *actively* mean it, point to it, locate it, have an anticipatory sense that I shall land in its immediacy. And I can do this because the mechanism of meaning, in this second and active sense, apart from all the differences of content that constitute "meanings," is *itself* also a real experience; and so the immediate sense of reality, though it never can be pictured or reduced to relationships, is always with me to irradiate with a

feeling of significance my knowledge references to the real. And if we wish to make this explicit, we have only to stop for a moment to *give attention* to the present psychical field to have what may intelligibly be called a direct knowledge of existence, apart from the need of ideas to mediate it. For in the act of attention through which we bring into the center of the conscious field a present fact of relatively stable immediate experience, knowledge and being merge; we *are* what we know (attentively realize), and we know what at the moment we are. And if we can find no features of this feeling background which lend themselves to descriptive terms, and can only identify it by directing others to go and do likewise, and see what they will see, this only means that reality is deeper and thicker than logic—a conclusion which after all ought not to surprise the philosopher any more than it does the ordinary sensible man.

Meanwhile we are now in a position to add one further point to the preceding account of outer or physical existence as well. For if we are all the while actually experiencing reality itself in the form of feeling stuff, we are in immediate possession of something which may very well be used, in the same instinctive way in which essences are projected, to color our attitude toward the objective situations which are brought home to us primarily through our biological reactions. I do not of course mean that there is any conscious recognition of outer realities

as having the same sort of existence that feeling is experienced as having. Such an idea, if it ever comes to us at all, evidently can only be the outcome of a belated philosophical speculation; it has indeed no possibility of arising in primitive experience, since the intellectual recognition of feeling as such is itself a relatively late product. But I see nothing against supposing, nevertheless, that the latent standard which feeling-existence supplies may enter as an element into the unanalyzed sense of existence which we undoubtedly project beyond ourselves; and that along with the blind sensational feeling that accompanies muscular adjustment, and the more or less obscure intellectual perception of a relevancy to needs or ends, there may be present also a still obscurer sense of "isness" itself, which reflection will show to be a shadow cast by our own personal acquaintance with existence in the inner life.

There still remains one factor in the analysis with which this section opened which I have not defined —the "activity" aspect of knowledge. About this a good deal of controversy has centered, into which I do not think it necessary to go, since it hardly bears very directly on my present inquiry. It perhaps will be enough to say that by mental activity I mean, not an ultimate metaphysical category, but something that can be empirically described—a succession, namely, of concrete mental states attended by a sense of direction, of intent or purpose, such as is

rendered possible through the presence of an "idea" of some future end or event to which the process is felt as leading up. There can scarcely be a question as to the reality of experiences of this sort, though difficulties may be raised about their basis and conditions; I doubt whether the same thing can be said of the "activity" of some of the neo-realists, as an entity "in itself" standing in an undefined relationship to objects.

KNOWLEDGE OF OTHER SELVES AND OF THE PAST

IN what has been said about the nature of the knowing process, I have so far had in mind chiefly the world of nature, more particularly with reference to its perceptual basis. Meanwhile there remain two other very important sorts of fact which also plainly we are competent to know—the reality of other selves, and of those past occurrences for which we have to trust to memory. If the results of the preceding analysis are sound, we should expect to find these too involving, as indeed they seem to do, the presence of an essence to mediate our acquaintance with them. But the details can hardly be quite the same as in the case of objects of perception; and something further is therefore needed for their understanding.

The attributing to objects, or to certain of them, not only the qualities and relationships which sense experience supplies, but also those more intimate emotional and volitional and intellectual characters that in a peculiar fashion constitute what I call "myself," might perhaps be thought to follow readily enough from the results already reached. If these latter essences are actually present within the inner life, why should we not instinctively assign them also on occasion to the realities with which

we are in contact? In point of fact it has been very generally held in recent years that in our early commerce with the world we probably do thus feel that we are in relationship, not with the "physical" in its modern scientific sense, but with living agencies akin to ourselves. And it is undoubtedly so that up to a point a tendency exists to personify our surroundings, which might be accounted for in the way proposed. Such a theory has been set forth very persuasively by Mr. Santayana in his *Reason in Common Sense*. On this showing, that which chiefly calls for explanation is not the belief in other selves, since these are the natural and ordinary objects of belief; what we have specially to explain is the manner in which such an instinctive tendency is checked, and the assignment of personal qualities limited to the instances where it really is justified.

I have never been able to avoid the feeling that this animistic or anthropomorphic interpretation of the primitive nature experience goes somewhat further than the probabilities warrant. It seems to presuppose in early man an excess of imaginative over practical interests which is not justified by our actual knowledge either of human or of animal nature, and which would have complicated seriously the business of living, difficult enough at best. The trouble with the mythologizing tendency as a sufficient account of the origin of the social experience, is that in its indiscriminate bestowal of human attributes it gets away from the practical conditions

of human life, where all objects are *not* on an equality. And as a matter of fact it is not certain that such an indiscriminate tendency really exists. Recent investigations have made it rather probable that the earliest form of animism is not so much "personification," as the attributing to the outer world of a pervasive and indwelling "power" which animates all things; and this in some sense may be regarded not as mythology but as truth. Later on no doubt a widespread disposition does exist to mythologize in the stricter sense. But here it seems likely that we have to do in large measure with a play of fancy dependent on the psychological law of suggestion. And not only does suggestion already imply the prior presence of social material, but long before leisure for the imaginative life can be presupposed, the social experience must have been already a secure possession. It would seem more plausible, then, to recognize limits to a primitive anthropomorphism. A special occasion will in consequence be needed to account for its appearance; and such an occasion is at hand in the exercise of those tendencies of human nature which we roughly name the social.

Meanwhile however, unless we discriminate a little, this new suggestion also has to meet what may seem a difficulty. We are supposing that the recognition of other selves is the immediate and instinctive reading of certain objects in the light of what goes on within ourselves when the social impulses are called into play. The advantage here is the same as

in the previous theory, in that we are undertaking to dispense with the more intellectual and sophisticated methods which an appeal to "analogy" seems to presuppose, but which there is slight reason to think within the powers of primitive man. The fact is however that often, and perhaps typically, the quality which, correctly or incorrectly, we assign to a socius is not the quality we ourselves are now experiencing, but a complementary one. After I have once accepted another self, I assume that he will have the same sense experiences that I have in a common situation, and I am likely to assume too, until I am disillusioned, that his opinions and feelings will naturally be the same as mine. But in the primitive impulsive and emotional experiences to which it seems most natural to look for the origin of the recognition, such an identity will not necessarily be found to hold. The object of an emotional reaction I envisage in the first place, not as itself hating, but as wicked or hateful; not as loving, but as love-provoking; not as jealous, but as something to be jealous of; not as fearing, but as fearsome.

The fact accordingly of this difference in the content of the referring act suggests that the theory will need to be made a little more complex. We are not to look, it would seem, for the earliest form of the "social" object in a creature similarly minded with ourselves, but only in an object with a peculiar significance and interest for us, something which is not simply exploited in a utilitarian way, but which

evokes a direct emotional reaction of the sort we later come to associate with the social life. Here the "reality" of the object derives, like the reality of anything else, from the reaction of the organism in the presence of that which it has to take into account; while the *peculiar* character of the object results from the part it plays as the source or occasion of the social emotions.

The full conception of a "self," however, involves much more than this; it is incomplete without a considerable similarity of inner content also. And for explaining this last in its completeness, it is impossible to dispense with an appeal to some form of—often more or less unconscious—analogy. At the start, however, the process is supposedly still too immediate to deserve this title. Here we may conceive that the same social tendencies in man continue to play a leading part, but in their more distinctively coöperative aspect. Not only do there exist certain emotionally interesting objects, but some of these objects we find ourselves prepared to join in interesting common tasks—which we may take as including the task of fighting as well as that of coöperation in the stricter sense. And under these conditions, it does not appear unnatural that we should be led to feel in the object which shares in the common activity, and helps to make it possible, the presence of the same inner intentions and emotions and satisfactions which we are experiencing in ourselves. This process, when we come to see its

implications, will translate itself logically into an act of analogy; and we then extend its operation widely. Originally however it will not be necessary that we should recognize such facts of the inner life as ours, or indeed that we should recognize them as existences at all; their "essence" might be referred as directly as the essences we call physical.

An analysis of the knowledge of *past* reality involves somewhat greater complications. This fact of memory has indeed often seemed to philosophers a peculiarly mysterious and baffling sort of thing. How can the mind reach out into the past and grasp the non-existent? Is there not something here more than ordinarily paradoxical? And of course memory, like anything else in the last analysis, *is* mysterious. On the whole, however, I am inclined to question whether the *distinctive* mystery which is supposed to belong to it does not tend to disappear on examination.

It has been common for philosophers to look upon memory as more fundamental than perception, and, more or less explicitly, to build up the world of perceptual objects on the basis of its pronouncements; the philosophy of Shadworth Hodgson is a specially explicit instance of this typical attitude. And of course in one sense this is undeniable. The fact of persistence in consciousness, whereby the bare moment of awareness is enabled to become a portion of a more or less enduring experience, is the necessary presupposition of any philosophy; without it, "ex-

perience" would not be at all. This fact of immediate memory, or of the sense of time distinctions within the specious present, I shall not attempt to account for; I see no alternative to regarding it as one of the ultimate data on which reason has to build. But even if we call such an aspect of experience by the name of memory, it is not to be identified with that recall of a lapsed and vanished past to which the term is commonly meant to apply; and it has so far proved impossible to deduce this last capacity from it directly.

I propose to begin then from the other end, and instead of using memory to explain perception, to take perception as a starting point for the account of memory. Assuming accordingly that perceptual knowledge, when we look at it in a natural way, implies the recognition of a real world, independent of the knowing process, to which we in perception assign a "nature," it follows that we still are in a world of objects when, in the absence of actual contact with the senses, the original experience is ideally reinstated. For memory to be possible, we do not have somehow to start from the remembering act, and out of this evolve a transition to a wider universe; to "remember" an object we must first be able to think or imagine it, and in thinking it we are already in an independent world. And the advantage of connecting the recognition of such a world with perception rather than with thought or memory, lies in the fact that in the "idea" the stress

and pull that attend the contact of an organic propensity with an actual present environment are no longer there to help us to an explanation, and we seem to be left in consequence to an unmediated, and therefore magical, leap beyond the thinking experience by its own unaided powers.

The next point to be noted is, that in this world of objects there holds, among other relations, the time relation also. Time, that is, is not in the first instance a function of memory, in the sense that it comes to light as a relation between the present experiencing or self and a remembered past; it attaches to objects or events both of them alike in the objectively known world. This would not be so if we were first compelled to construct perceptual objects from the memory experience before we were in possession of cognitively independent reals. But assuming that such reals have already been given in perception, there is no reason why they might not show a new relationship to one another in which no recognition of the remembering experience plays a part. It is not essential for the present purpose that we should have a theory as to the conditions under which this conscious recognition first comes about, though supposedly it is mediated through connection with human purposes and their progressive realization; it is enough that we do perceive the distinctions of before and after, and have in consequence the materials out of which to construct a temporal world. I am able, then, to think of things as tem-

porally connected; and when I remember an event in the past there is always present, along with whatever else may be implied, the reconstruction of a situation in which temporal relationships are involved, and which I now hold before my mind as a purely intellectual and non-temporal "idea" or essence. One essential of what is meant by localizing a thing in the past is the process of fitting it into a wider ideal context which takes the form of such a temporally related system.

But even supposing the whole course of the world's events to be taken up into such a system, we nevertheless have not yet arrived at the experience which we call memory. I can place a fact of Greek history in an historical context; but I cannot *remember* it as past, though I can know its pastness. And a similar conclusion applies to one further important element in the situation, of which likewise we must say that, while it is a necessary element, it does not constitute memory as such. This is the feeling of familiarity. Apart from this sense of intimacy and warmth which certain experiences possess, there would be no tendency to welcome them; but such a feeling offers in itself no guarantee. In true memory, a picture rises indeed before me which has the standing of an old acquaintance; but so equally is the picture of the landing of the Pilgrim Fathers familiar. The sense of familiarity is just a dumb feeling, whose interpretation has still to follow. There remains one further essential to the memory

experience—that the event should be located also in *our* past. Even experiences that really have been ours we may recall, in reveries or day-dreams, and live over again with gusto or repugnance, without in the stricter sense being entitled to speak of this as memory, provided we are absorbed in the quality of the experience itself, regardless of its location in a particular series of experienced events. In such a case we are reliving the past rather than remembering it. The thing that is needed in addition is the more or less explicit sense of a connection between the past occurrence, and the living reality of the present self.

And the most obvious point of identity to establish this connection is, in the first instance, the presence of a continuing disposition, or interest, or whatever it may be called, which brings the past experience into the same active scheme or system that now is prepared to function anew, as a portion of its ideal teleological pattern. This, it should be remarked, has no need to involve any explicit recognition of the "self," or of the present moment of experience *as* an experience; as a matter of fact it cannot easily be supposed to do this, since both the self and the psychological present are concepts of a relatively late date, while memory must go back almost to the beginning of things. But so too must the immediate sense of present ends be equally original. And the tying up of a familiar image to the serving of such ends not only suggests a beginning

therefore for the remembering experience, but even yet it is involved in the most intimate and vital type of memory. Certainly, in spite of what may be our *knowledge* that an event belongs to our own past, it actually does seem strange and foreign to us so long as it lies outside of dispositions that are still alive and a part of our present nature. It is doubtful whether I can be said in any proper sense to "remember" an incident in remote childhood, as distinct from the habit I have formed of thinking of it as mine. It might perhaps be urged that the sudden recrudescence of an event in childhood is possible, with no intermediate repetitions to set up a habit. But granting the possibility, the fact may still easily be that the event only gets located in our personal past, either through an inference that what is revivable must once have been an experience of *ours*—a dubious inference in the light of false memory—or because the revived fact finds a natural place in a context already recognized as ours.

Meanwhile this last point suggests the final remark that, in a great majority of our so-called memories, a connection with the actual present self is only latent, and we have little more than the intellectual recognition of a content which we have grown used to calling ours. Here it is necessary, in addition, that we should not only have made use of memory in the actual conduct of life, but should have arrived at a recognition of the "self" as a serial group of particular psychological experiences

more or less accurately dated, and attaching at its proximate end to what we have also learned to think of explicitly as the present moment. This, however, is a relatively sophisticated and even academic conception of memory. It takes the form primarily of a logical or ideal system in which the present self enters as also only an intellectual or ideal content; and as such it serves as one of the intellectual tools of the practical act of remembering, rather than directly constitutes it.

What I have been trying to maintain is, then, that we do not have, outside of primary memory, which is not in question here, what has sometimes been called an immediate and present sense of past experience. The experience of memory is analyzable into three aspects—an organized habit or disposition, a purely intellectual framework of ideal content within which temporal relationships hold, and the feeling of familiarity, which last however neither constitutes memory as an intellectual fact, nor guarantees its reliability. Meanwhile the "transcendence" of what is remembered to the present mental state is due primarily to none of these, nor to all of them together, but is already involved in the fact that recall is an ideal repetition of that act of perception which gives us "objects" to begin with. The groundwork of memory is thus in terms of a world of *objects* between which a perceived relation of temporal succession exists, the piecing on of this to the present situation being also a purely intel-

lectual construction rather than any novel form of immediate experiencing. And its essential character is, normally, not the restoring of a flow of past experiences continuous with the present one, as James Mill for example thought, but the bringing of the past into connection with the significant meaning of our lives, as represented by existing interests and ends. It is only secondarily that, after our attention has once been turned to the psychological fact contemporaneous with the objects of a present interest, we build up the picture of a single life history in which various events are more or less definitely dated.

SOME COMPETING THEORIES

IN the preceding pages I have given an account of the knowing experience which in my judgment is verifiable as an analysis, and open to fewer serious objections on the whole than competing theories. I propose next to add a few remarks of a somewhat desultory sort, with the purpose more especially of placing the conception in its relation to various current philosophies.

That to which it has the closest relation is, of course, common-sense or "representative" dualism. As a matter of fact I should have no objection personally to accepting this title for it, were it not that I should be afraid of offering too inviting a target to critics inclined to be captious. It has for some time been a commonplace among philosophers of a great variety of brands, that to be a "dualist," more particularly a representative dualist, is to reveal at the outset one's entire incompetence for the philosophical game. This habit of giving a descriptive title a bad name, and then using it to condemn an uncongenial theory, is always an unfortunate one, and accounts for many of the easy victories which metaphysicians win; but it has to be taken into account. It will therefore be safer to call attention once more to the precise nature of the resemblances and the differences between the present theory and the commoner form of dualism.

What the representative theory of knowledge has usually been interpreted as saying, is to the effect that we first come to know sensations as facts in the inner life, and then project these outside ourselves, probably through the need of finding a cause for their occurrence. Up to this point dualism would be essentially in agreement with the ordinary forms also of a scientific or realistic agnosticism. But while agnosticism supposes that the only relation which sensations bear to their causes is the causal one itself, and that no community of nature exists between the two, representationalism would hold that there is, to some extent at least, a likeness also, and that the image in the mind "copies" the reality outside. I have repudiated as explicitly as I know how the opinion that we first know something that can be called a mental state; and with this it will be found that most of the stock objections that philosophers feel under obligation to go on repeating fall away at once. On the other hand, the position I have adopted does continue to be a dualism, and knowledge may even, if the statement is not misinterpreted, be said to copy reality. The grounds for this dualism it may perhaps be useful to restate.

While sensations or mental images are not the primary *objects* of knowledge, there *is* such a thing as a mental state distinct in point of existence from the object known, and serving as a necessary condition of the knowing process. The inability to separate these two claims has been responsible for a very

large amount of rather artificial ingenuity devoted to the task of eliminating a datum which, it has been thought, renders genuine knowledge impossible. But whatever may be the temptation thus to get rid of mental states as a supposed screen between the mind and reality, the effort is bound to be a *tour de force*, which leaves the unsophisticated reader incredulous, and the theorist himself usually a little apologetic. He does indeed have his own appeal to make to common sense. Is it so, he asks the dualist, that the plain man in perception recognizes any distinction between objects, as if the real thing were only the projection of an inner copy? But this question quite loses its point if we suppose that the mental state does not in perception *recognize* itself as such, but simply *is* there as the vehicle of the act of knowing. And to deny that subsequent inquiry will reveal the existence of "psychological" data is on the face of it a little arbitrary. Greek philosophy might excusably confine itself, with no need for apology, to a choice between a universe of material substance and a universe of logical entities, because analysis had not as yet succeeded in making explicit that difference between the physical or the logical, and the psychical, which Descartes erected into a philosophical postulate. But for the modern thinker to do this, ignoring the most insistent of the problems which philosophy has agitated since Descartes' time, and the long and honorable history of empirical psychology—for psychology did not come into existence with the appear-

ance of behaviorism in the last few years—is not equally excusable. Both the logical idealism imported from Germany, and the new materialism of the American neo-realists and the pragmatists, are so difficult to come to terms with controversially just for this reason, that they quietly set aside all the evidence pointing to the presence in the world of specific realities which are not identical either with logical terms and propositions, or with organic reactions to a physical environment, and so go back to the analytical naïveté of Plato and Democritus.

One attempt at a similar outcome has indeed been made which is not open to this charge; it does not ignore altogether the evidence for the psychical, but, starting from the empirical fact, it undertakes by carrying the analysis further to get rid in a legitimate manner of the mental state as a special entity. This is the neo-realistic doctrine of knowledge as an "act of awareness"—a doctrine which splits up the supposed conscious fact that intervenes between knowing and its object into an "act" and a "content," the qualitative content being then identified with the "object" of knowledge, while the "mental" no longer stands as a mediate image or sensation, but as an unmediated "operation" face to face with reality. On the whole I do not think it can be said that the difficulties which this ingenious theory raises have been appreciably diminished by the discussions of the last few years. It still remains very hard to grasp the notion of a bare "act" which has

no further nature; this *seems* to be the mere *concept* of activity, and in that case would represent only another attempt to reduce reality to logical definition. So, again, the more one reflects upon the peculiar direction which this act is supposed to take in order to constitute knowledge, the more it seems apparent that we are getting away from any possibility of throwing real light upon the nature of knowing, and are leaving it a sheer mystery. To be related to an "activity" stands for nothing whatever that is distinctive; and if we add the term "awareness" to distinguish this activity from others in the world, this is, once more, merely identifying the peculiar phenomenon by a word, and leaving it without any concrete characterization.

The only real reason for refusing to turn back to the traditional belief that, in connection with the processes of the biological life, certain new realities make their appearance of a sensational or affectional order, is the supposed difficulty that it puts in the way of genuine possibilities of knowledge. Sensations *appear* to be there, as anyone who will make a serious attempt to follow the analyses of the older empirical psychology may convince himself. And I have endeavored already to show not only that they are consistent with the possibility of knowledge, but that they are urgently demanded if the knowing function is not to be left in the air with no ascertainable connection with reality. It is true great care will need to be taken verbally in order

to avoid difficulties, and certain fundamental distinctions will have to be kept constantly in mind. In particular, it is essential to hold fast to the difference between awareness as a cognitive term in the strict or mediate sense of knowledge, and awareness as the *felt* presence of reality in immediate experience, before it is attended to or reflected on. But this is a readily verifiable distinction if one will take the trouble; and a refusal to use it for avoiding verbal inconsistencies suggests a determination to get rid of the psychical rather than a candid weighing of its claims.

But while the point of view I am representing agrees with the older dualism in insisting upon the reality of the mental state, it is also able, as I hope I have made plain, to sympathize up to a certain point with that "logical" emphasis which is much more typical of modern epistemology. For it has insisted that the ideal *content* of knowledge, while it has its existential basis in the sensation or image, is in truth a logical fact, in the sense that it is merely the characters embodied in the mental state which knowing refers automatically to the world in contact with the organism, and not the mental state itself. It also insists, however, that the abstract content is not the entire fact of knowledge, but stands rather for a tool which actual beings make use of in a world of actual things and persons; and here it comes sharply into conflict with certain rival theories. I shall add in this connection a few words to

indicate somewhat more explicitly wherein the deficiencies of two of these in particular appear to me to lie.

In the case of objective idealism, the fundamental vice of method may perhaps be traced to an ambiguity in the notion of the "concrete universal." What this phrase ought plainly to stand for, as an attempted characterization of reality or the universe, is a unity of system inclusive of the entire actual content of existence—things, persons, the processes of history, the evolution of physical nature—all related in terms of some luminous sort of inner unity. It is to express this realistic view that the term "experience" is drawn upon. Experience, as is particularly obvious in the philosophy of such a relatively concrete-minded idealist as Royce, is evidently intended to bring to the interpretation of the universe the analogy of a *human* experience—a concrete psychological process which is interpretable not as a conceptual unity merely, but as an existence also, or a whole of feeling.

But experience is not the word that most adequately suggests the original emphasis in idealism, or the *method* on which it still continues mainly to rely. And accordingly in practice the concrete universal has more frequently another meaning, which must be distinguished from the former one if we are not to overlook very real problems, and so render our philosophy over-facile. In this second meaning, the universal is itself a *concept*, though a concept which

gathers up the conceptual nature of all other interpretative categories. To experience, this inclusive concept may indeed apply as a description of its logical nature; but experience in the Roycean or Bradleyan sense *is* something more than its conceptual definition. And in this second sense, as an affair of definition or of dialectic, the concrete universal is no longer identical with the universe itself, *unless* we start by assuming that reality is *nothing but* a system of logical concepts. It is with the second or conceptual interpretation that, as I have said, most idealists are almost exclusively concerned. Actual things and actual processes for the most part they ignore. They are dealing not with men, but with mankind or society; not with minds, but with Mind; not with organisms, but with *the* organism. And their aim is to show how one *idea* implies another, or how a simpler *sort* of thing involves in its "definition" something more complex.

And the assumption back of this which the idealist invariably makes—when, that is, he does not set aside the concrete altogether and so escape the problem—is that, when we have once shown that conceptual definitions through their mutual implication imply an intellectual unity of "mind" or "spirit," we are justified forthwith in saying that the things defined form a unity of precisely the same sort and degree. But this is something we have no right to *assume*. If it is true, it must be shown to be true. And the more the case is examined, the less

evident does the thesis become, unless once again we meet the difficulty by repudiating its source, and refuse to see any distinction between things and their conceptual definitions.

There are two preliminary points which at least suggest an inadequacy in the idealistic method. In the first place, it notoriously fails to make even a step toward breaking down the empirical distinction between the rationally necessary and the contingent, and deducing the actual facts and occurrences that constitute the "real" world. Whatever light philosophy may succeed in throwing on the ideal meaning of history after the facts have been given to it, it has absolutely no way of saying what these facts must be; and it usually stultifies itself completely when it ventures upon prophecy. But if conceptual implications were in reality capable of being transferred without reinterpretation to existence, this helplessness is difficult to explain.

About this first difficulty idealists have, in comparison with its importance, never had very much to say. The second point has received more frequent recognition, though here also a serious attempt at a solution has seldom been undertaken. Objective idealism is committed to the notion that reality is essentially a *timeless* whole. So long as it confines itself to the manipulation of concepts this is intelligible, and even inevitable. A logical fact is a timeless fact because, in giving our attention to the abstract *character* of things, we are explicitly taking

it out of time. Time may indeed itself enter into a conceptual definition; history, for example, can hardly be defined except as undergoing succession. But it is not the actual process of time itself that persists in the logical world. Time here becomes just the *idea* of time, and the idea of time is of course itself timeless. The moment however we turn to the real world of things and actions, we find timelessness an extremely difficult notion. It is quite impossible to think this real world concretely, as it actually comes to us in experience, without thinking of it as undergoing progressive change; anything else would falsify its obvious character. The idealist has no solution of the difficulty. He is bound to hold to the claim that reality is timeless, for the sake of the conceptual universal in which his main interest always lies; and if by chance he does turn instead to the concrete whole of *existence*, his only recourse is to lay the blame on the inadequacy of our human ways of thinking. This at least raises a presumption against the identification of the two forms of the "universal."

And the doubt appears to be confirmed when we come to scrutinize the assumption itself. The thesis is, once more, that the unity of a conceptual system is convertible directly with the unity of a concrete universe. Let us consider first an instance where the object which a conceptual unity defines may also be safely taken as existing, and where the identity therefore is open to testing. A good example will be

found in the notion of "society." Conceptually man and society are mutually implicated in a unity which is intimate and organic; it is impossible to define one without reference to the other. And this definition of society will of course "apply" to society as the true description of an existing fact. But the attempt to translate the conceptual unity of definition directly into a "real" unity of existence meets with serious obstacles. Such a real unity we have before us as a model in the experienced whole of feeling which constitutes an individual life; but it is only by an extreme of paradox that the philosopher can claim for society the same sort of existential wholeness that is found in the lives of its individual members. The concept of social experience is the description not of a personal experience, but, explicitly, of a society, or of a community of personal experience-centers. The moment we turn from the concept man to *men*, these last reveal a form of being which is exclusive of other men, though at the same time the presence of ideal references to other similar beings makes society a part of their significance or meaning, and implicates it therefore in the *definition* of all that their nature involves.

Even in the case, then, of realities to which we have empirical reason to believe that a systematic description applies, we cannot pass without further argument from this description to a similar unity of existence. It is quite conceivable that things exist in separation, connected by relationships that "sub-

sist," but that do not constitute an existential or experienced whole; and this seems to be actually the case at innumerable points in the existing world. If accordingly we recognize any difference at all between speculative concepts and concrete experience —and the disposition of idealists to reduce reality itself to the conceptual must again constantly be allowed for—we are also bound to recognize that unity may have a different meaning in the two fields, which makes it hazardous to pass uncritically from one of them to the other.

Meanwhile the method of idealism might have a second interpretation, in some respects less open to objection. Without pretending now to translate reality into a distinctive unity of "experience," analogous to the wholeness of an individual life, it may mean to assert, simply, that a true *description* of the real world, *whatever* its existence may mean, can be attained by manipulating conceptual data, and applying to reality the sort of inclusive concept which most completely harmonizes these data.

Taken as a hypothetical method merely, this does no doubt represent an aspect of the process of intellectual inquiry. If we are trying to understand the nature of something where the empirical evidence stops short of being conclusive, it is natural that we should go to work by applying to it, tentatively, further categories with which we are familiar —categories whose chance of success is perhaps likely to increase as they become more complex and

inclusive. Such a method has constantly been used by philosophers, in particular, as a source for their ultimate constructions of reality. Thus the concept of a social whole again—one of the most "organic" of the unities that experience offers us—may in this way, irrespective of the sort of question previously raised, be used to supply a hypothetical account of the world, which justifies our faith in so far as it appears to overcome the contradictions that develop in the process of thinking reality, and to throw light upon its dark places.

But idealism contends for more than this. Its thesis is that pure thought has a definite logical or dialectical structure such that, from whatever point we start, we shall, if we care about avoiding contradiction, find ourselves necessarily led to a comprehensive concept into which each subordinate category enters as an aspect or moment, and which we are forced to acquiesce in as a true account of the actual universe. This Hegel undertook to show to the world once for all; and the undertaking has very commonly been assumed by his disciples to be a permanent landmark in the history of human thinking. It is true that nobody now supposes that Hegel's own dialectical results were final; that few idealists make any attempt to provide a substitute; and that many of them do not conceal a suspicion that the task is one beyond the powers of the philosopher to accomplish. Nevertheless the tradition still holds that the Hegelian dialectic represents the funda-

mental ideal of reason, and could be carried through were reason as competent in practice as it is in essence.

It is not of course my purpose here to subject to any thorough criticism the Hegelian logic. But I may in passing make two remarks of a very general nature. It does not lack plausibility to claim that what we are unable to think without falling into self-contradiction cannot be true, or completely true, of reality. I shall indicate presently in what form I think such a claim can be accepted. But Hegel has notoriously a peculiar notion of contradiction. If one takes almost any stage in the dialectic, he will find Hegel arguing that because, when I make a certain statement in terms of a given thought category, I can, *from some different point of view*, make with equal propriety a contrary statement, I have fallen into contradiction. But this is not what we ordinarily mean by the word. Jones is both a son and a father, but there is no contradiction here; the fact that he also is something that is not a son does not affect the truth of the statement that he really is a son, among other things. If indeed we wish to speak of that which fails to be completely intelligible or inclusive of the full totality of truth as contradictory, we have the right to do so. But it will be sure to lead to trouble and misunderstanding. Outside of the peculiar idealistic view of knowledge, it is universally recognized that a truth may in the strictest sense be true even though it is not *all* the truth; in the

larger system of truth it may still persist as an element, unchanged in its essential nature by the wider relationships into which it enters. And if this is possible at all, it excludes any *necessity* that a true description of the world must be in the form of a single comprehensive category into which the self-identity of every lower category merges and disappears.

And even if we *were* to allow that intelligibility can be secured only in terms of one comprehensive notion, the idealist still is going beyond his obvious and unquestioned rights. For while it may seem natural to say that we cannot accept as true what is inconsistent, it does not follow that because a system is consistent it therefore must be true. Supposing it possible to attain to some all-embracing category which rounds out and completes each lesser one, it still is no consequence of the law of contradiction that this must needs hold of the actual world which human thought tries to understand.

And the ground for this judgment is evident if we translate the idealistic thesis into a simpler and more empirical form—a form which, though the idealist himself would not of course accept it, will, it is likely, carry a stronger appeal to some minds than his own interpretation does. Hegel's supreme category finds its easiest interpretation if we turn it into psychology, and hold that the unity which throws light on the categories is the purposive or "organic" unity of an individual life-process. If all the

notions of which I make intellectual use are employed in the interests of "life"—a statement that gets meaning only in so far as life is intelligent and purposive—it would not be very surprising if we were to find that each of them can be shown to have a more or less organic place within this teleological whole, thereby becoming easier to understand. Some of the puzzles about the popular notion of causality, for example, might disappear if causation were to be conceived as borrowing a part of its apparent character from a larger teleological situation, wherein intelligible bonds of connection can be seen to hold.

In point of fact it is often possible to interpret Hegel from such a standpoint. But if we once regard the unity of rational system as a function of the intellectual efforts of an individual mind to adjust life to its conditions, we have taken away the ground for any logical necessity that it should be adequate to this real conditioning world. A tool in the evolutionary process, we may plausibly believe that as a tool it would not work as successfully as it does were it not roughly adjusted to the facts. But this is an empirical, and not a logical argument. It is consistent with wide variations in the degree of accuracy that thought attains. At best it applies far more forcibly to the simpler than to the more comprehensive concepts. And it is open to the logical objection that it cannot be made to work at all unless we first beg a sufficient amount of unreasoned faith in our

intellectual machinery to have attained a belief in the evolutionary process on which the argument rests.

I may amplify a little the contention here by turning to a somewhat simpler form of the idealistic claim, which comes much closer to our more familiar use of terms. In recent years Royce, in particular, has made continual use of this. The essence of the new claim is, that there are certain truths about the constitution of the world which we are forced to accept because they are implicated in the very nature of reason, and because they have therefore to be used in any rational argument whatsoever, even an argument that attempts to controvert them. And since, if we were to abandon reason, we should be excluding ourselves from the sphere in which truth and falsity have meaning, we are therefore justified in claiming them as "necessary" truths. In a way they depend on the self-evident truth that two contradictory propositions cannot both hold good; but not in the sense that they can be "deduced" from this. Rather, they offer an *instance* of contradiction, but an instance which is given a peculiar philosophical significance by the fact that, of the two contradictories, one gets decisively the upper hand through our inability to think the other consistently without presupposing it. In its general form the truth here reduces itself in the end to the proposition that reality is a rational and consistent whole; the attempt to treat it as irrational is self-contradictory, in view

of the fact that such a judgment can be passed only as we already presuppose the rational principles that make judgment possible.

As a preliminary to considering this claim, it is well to be clear about what concretely it commits us to. Since reason is an empty term unless it stands for the particular rational structure of our human ways of judging, or our human "minds," what it asserts is, that I can be entirely certain that what *my* reason—*qua* human being—tells me is the nature of the world must actually be its nature; I cannot on a grand scale be mistaken. But this proposition—that reality must, not does, conform to my mind—seems when it is examined on its merits not without its dubious features. The doubt is not purely academic, but is based upon positive reasons for holding that my mind may lead me into error; and I can readily imagine circumstances—in terms, say, of Descartes' devil—which theoretically would make such error thoroughgoing. Even though while I am occupied with it I may find the idealistic argument plausible and not easy to refute, it is difficult to view the outcome without a returning sense of the apparent presumptuousness of its claims, which appreciably weakens its appeal. At best my state of mind is apt to be not so much a whole-hearted acceptance of the result, as it is an admission that I fail to find any flaw in the reasoning; and what is the good of a belief in certainty unless the belief itself is certain?

There is one presupposition, it is true, under which the conclusion does appear to follow. If reality is identified once more, after the common habit of idealists, with the content of knowledge taken as a logical or rational content, then it seems to be a necessary consequence that reality follows the laws of reason. The content of reality is just a content of reason, and of course cannot violate its own nature. But this only means that if one assumes to begin with the thing to be established—the validity of a certain conception of reality—the same conception will naturally emerge in the conclusion; and such a line of proof has commonly been frowned upon by the logic books.

Meanwhile there is a way to evade the argument if we start with the alternative assumption which I have been adopting, and make truth consist in the reference of an intellectual content to a further and independent real. To say that reality is irrational would then have the meaning, that if I could—which I cannot—absorb the real world into my experience, I should find that it does not meet any expectations that my rational mind is competent to form. There is nothing unintelligible in such a statement. And I must as a matter of fact be able to think of the possibility of something that is non-rational, for I am at present talking about it, and my adversary is refuting me on the assumption that he knows what I mean. To turn about now and say that the thought of the non-rational is itself a thought of

the rational, since it is a thought, seems very much like verbal juggling; we have an idea, and then suddenly we find that we haven't it at all, but a quite different idea instead. Either then we are mistaken in thinking that we ever had the idea of the non-rational, which makes nonsense of the whole discussion, or the idea is possible, in which case no argument can prove it impossible. And if I can think of a non-rational reality, what becomes of the impossibility that it should exist through the impossibility of thinking it?

What really is evident here is, not that the thought of the non-rational is a thought of the rational, but that the thought of the non-rational is a rational thought, which is an altogether different thing. In thinking of reality I must indeed follow the laws of thinking; but why should this mean that reality must follow the laws of thinking? I cannot, it is argued, say that it is true that reality is irrational, because in calling it true, I am implying that reality is following the laws of truth. But in point of fact I am not applying the word "true" to reality, but only to the judgment; the reality *is*, and that is all. If I were to say that reality is irrational, and also at the same time that I can know concretely wherein its irrational character consists, I should no doubt be contradicting myself; but this is not what I am saying. And I fail entirely to see why there might not be a portion of reality so constituted with standards of its own that, by the use

of them, it should be able to think the possibility of other reality such as does not meet the same standards.

To all this it may perhaps be replied that in drawing a distinction between reality and the knowing process, we are overlooking the fact that after all my reason works always upon the real world as its material, and refers to it. My thought is always about the object, and not about itself; and this carries with it the impossibility that *reality* should be self-contradictory, and not merely the conclusion that *I* cannot logically contradict myself. And I am perfectly ready to grant that this is so in a certain very abstract sense; indeed it follows from my whole position. I should agree that we find ourselves unable to doubt the rationality of the world, in so far as this means only that it is literally impossible for us to hold two contradictory beliefs about reality when we once see them to be contradictory—the belief, for example, both that an object is white and that it is not white, in the same sense; when I try to think both propositions together, the attempt breaks down. And so to this extent the law of contradiction holds of *things*, and is not merely a "mental" law. While I do not feel sure *a priori* and in the abstract that nothing can be unless I am able to think it, yet concretely I cannot *believe* something to be what my knowing constitution makes it impossible for me to believe it to be. And since, for *me*, reality is accepted only as

guaranteed by belief, I shall always count on reality being self-consistent in so far as I take the trouble to think about reality at all.

But the results for philosophy of this conclusion fall far short of idealistic demands. So long as the possibility exists of withholding belief from *both* the contradictory assertions, and leaving the mind in complete suspense, we at least remain without any knowledge *in particular* about the world. It is true that while I do not have to make a choice, I am forced to the abstract conclusion that one *or* the other of them must be accepted. I cannot, in other words, believe the world to be strictly irrational, if this signifies the presence of some positive character attaching to it that would involve the exercise of my reason in the way of assertion and denial simultaneously. But I can very well conceive that it may fail to fit into any concrete form of rational understanding which my human way of viewing things can compass. And while, as I have said, a cautious scepticism would have to admit that it is one thing *or* the other, *either* as we think it or existing in some different way, *this* is a sort of truth which it is equally unimportant for agnosticism to avoid or for rationalism to defend.

Strictly speaking, the law of contradiction becomes concretely a decisive factor in our thinking only when it is a question, not of the nature of reality, but of the *consistency* of our beliefs and reasoning processes. Its function is to tell us, not that

any belief must be accepted as true, but that certain beliefs must be rejected, because they are not consistent with something else that, for independent reasons, we are unwilling to give up; or, more particularly, that certain *arguments* are invalid because they make use of the assumptions which it is their outcome to disprove. It is a weapon of critical attack, and not of construction. At best, therefore, all that it can do in the present case is to convict of inner inconsistency the argument of the man who sets out to prove by reason that the world *must* be irrational, since "must" is a rational term. But it cannot lead us to reject necessarily an hypothesis of non-rationality, because what this involves is, again, not the assumption that for *thinking* absence of contradiction is not essential, but the assertion that to *existence* the conditions which give rise to knowledge *may* fail to apply.

In objective idealism, for the most part, the logical emphasis is so entangled with the psychological and the existential—or at least with terminology which suggests these latter—that the theoretical bearings and consequences are not infrequently obscured. It is one special merit of neo-realism that it has made it possible to put the problems here very much more sharply, by its novel and to some extent its justified emphasis on the part which logical entities or essences play, not as immediately convertible with the universe, but as special objects of knowledge *in* the universe. That in this way it calls

attention to a highly important aspect of the real world, I should regard as unquestionable.

I have already indicated what on the other hand appears to me the primary source of the deficiencies of such a theory of knowledge. What the neo-realist calls the object of knowledge is indeed an essential factor in the knowledge situation; but it is not the "object." And there is one difficulty in particular which results from this on which it may be worth while to dwell a little further—a difficulty which has received proportionally a large amount of notice from the neo-realists, but which has failed to yield readily to treatment. A theory which presupposes the direct presence of reality itself in order to explain the experience of knowing and perceiving, finds it hard to account for the fact of error, since an object which is there in its own person must apparently *be* whatever it appears to be. The advantage which the doctrine of the present essay has in this connection should be obvious. The ideal content or the "what" of knowledge must indeed be present to the mind if any character is to be assigned to reality; and this "essence" is in every case just itself and nothing else. In terms of the essence there is a sense, too, in which we may be said always to be dealing with "reality," since no character or nature, in its component elements at any rate, could possibly be thought by us had it not first been discovered as a character in the real world. But that a given content must needs be real in a

further and more important sense, does not to our natural thinking seem at all to be the case. Knowledge is supposed not merely to involve the awareness of a descriptive content, but to assert the actual existence of this beyond the knowing act; and our belief may and often will be wrong when we assign a given content to a special location or a particular combination in the real world. Neo-realism however, since it does not recognize this distinction between the presence of the character to the awareness of the knower and its presence in the object known, is prevented from admitting this; and in consequence the possibility of error becomes a problem.

If we exclude a device, reminiscent alike of idealism and of pragmatism, to which Professor Alexander at times resorts—the identification of error, namely, with the experience of recognizing error, and its consequent explanation in terms of a social judgment which clashes with a merely personal one —there is only one very plausible account of the matter that neo-realism has suggested. And since this is common to writers who differ rather widely on a number of other important points, it may perhaps be taken as semi-official. The explanation is that while all objects alike are, by the very fact of their being apprehended at all, necessarily elements of the real world, there may also be certain relationships induced upon them by the activity of the mind itself, such as do not correctly represent the actual facts. The mind may bring "objects" into connec-

tions where they do not really belong, or it may leave out relations essential to their proper understanding; and in this way error may arise without compromising the reality of the objects themselves.

That this thesis has an apparent plausibility there is no occasion to deny. And the reason will be evident when we translate it into more familiar terms. If the mind is in possession of the essences of the world of things in the form of "ideas," which are not however identically the things themselves, there is nothing whatever against its having the ability to manipulate these ideas in ways that depart more or less widely from the real facts. But the neo-realist, who repudiates ideas, has a much more difficult problem on his hands. It would not, so far as I can see, be very inconsistent to suppose that the mind can sin by way of *omission* on neo-realistic terms. It may have a blind spot that causes it to overlook elements of reality that actually are there, and so its apprehension of the world may be mutilated. But while this accounts for the *incompleteness* of our knowledge, and its varying complexion at different times and for different persons, it does not account for error on its positive side. We should indeed have error were this partial knowledge asserted by us to be complete; and accordingly neo-realism shares again with idealism a disposition to dally with the definition of error as a will to infallibility and omniscience. But in any case no such definition will cover more than a very small proportion of the facts.

That I am open-minded, and aware of my limitations, still does not prevent my opinions from being in error in so far as they *are* in error; the essence of error lies in *wrong* belief, not in *dogmatic* belief.

Meanwhile when we turn from incompleteness of belief to positive error, the neo-realistic explanation meets with serious objections. My "mind" brings, we will say, a human head into relation to a horse's body, where it does not belong; and in consequence I think a centaur. But supposedly my theory of knowledge is meant to apply to relations as well as to qualities. And accordingly the question must again be asked: If an object of knowledge is known only through its immediate presence to awareness, how can I think a *relation* which *is* not, and so be in error about *it?* The relation also, if it is thought, would appear actually to be just what it is thought as being. To avoid the difficulty, it may perhaps be urged that though the particular instance of the relationship is not real, the relation as such is real—is an aspect, namely, of the real world; and this once more is doubtless true. No specific character of any sort can be thought which is not first *found* in reality itself. But in any case this still leaves very much to be accounted for. What is the connection between an abstract universal, and the world of existing particulars with the specific relationships between them? and how does a solution which presupposes only a knowledge of the former help us with the latter also? Or do we perhaps know universals only,

and is the universe itself nothing but a complex of universals? To such questions there are as yet no authoritative answers. And in the absence of a well-defined solution, we shall do best to turn from neo-realism therefore, to a more independent examination of certain of the points involved.

RELATIONS

IT has been evident everywhere in what has gone before, that a consideration of the part that "essences" play in knowledge, whether these be interpreted in an idealistic, or a neo-realistic, or a "dualistic" sense, comes up continually against the fact or being of relations, and cannot be finally settled apart from some theory about these elusive entities. To the nature of relationships I shall therefore now briefly revert, though I shall hardly expect to carry much conviction in the remarks I am going on to make.

It will be convenient to begin the inquiry by examining a term which has come to be used rather generally in this connection—the term "subsistence." In its current usage, subsistence has, to begin with, one meaning to which no exception need be taken. It may refer, that is, to any possible term that stands for a logical aspect or content of human thinking. This is unexceptionable for the reason that in so far it is only a more or less useful matter of terminology, which involves of necessity no special metaphysical interpretation. It is nothing more than a name for any identifiable fact of essence or of human *meaning*—any bit of descriptive content to which a term can be applied. This is perhaps to reduce to unduly modest proportions that realm of logical entities which recently has played such an

impressive rôle in generating and explaining the cosmos; but still, translated into a universe of discourse easier for me to find my way in, it enables me to follow after a fashion much of what the realist has to say. For me indeed, as I have sufficiently made clear, "description" calls up a much more concrete situation than for the realist, since a description is always *somebody's* description *of* something; and I can only envy the facility with which philosophers are able to simplify the problem by dropping out of their calculations this reference to existence—not the *idea* of existence but the real thing—implied in the words "somebody" and "something." Still I can, by abstraction, get before me the field of descriptive terms or entities as such; and by confining myself to this field, I seem, as I say, able to give a sense to all but the more cryptic utterances of the newer school. In this interpretation therefore, being, or subsistence, would stand simply for the possibility of belonging to such a realm, and of becoming an identical content of thought or meaning, a part of the universe of discourse.

In closer connection with an ultimate metaphysics is a further interpretation of subsistence, which also conveys to me a meaning sufficiently precise. Among other contents of this descriptive world abstracted from the things which it describes, will be found relations; and these relations would appear to have a further status, to which equally the term in a different and more distinctive sense could be applied. Be-

sides being itself a term or a meaning, a relation is also something that is meant. It is a fact to be discovered and identified in connection with the world which knowledge grasps. It does not simply have being as a logical concept in human discourse, but is in some sense or other that *of* which a logical proposition can be true. And it belongs to the *same* world to which its terms belong. When I say that a relation of similarity between two men really was there even before any human being had occasion to notice it, I am saying more than that such a relation is an intelligible concept, or that it holds between two logical entities in the form of a proposition. It holds between the *men*. Nevertheless while the new relationships which I discover are taken as belonging to the real world of which the connected terms are a description, they do not in appearance have reality in the *same sense* in which things do. We should hesitate to say that the relation of nearness between two objects "existed," *as* we say that the objects exist. But nevertheless it *is*. Here accordingly is a second fact to which the term subsistence might refer, in a way in which it would not usually be regarded as applying to purely logical entities or "universals."

In considering this status of relations, it may be noted first that, in spite of our hesitation in saying that they exist, they nevertheless seem always to *presuppose* existence. While relations *are* without being recognized, they apparently cannot exist, or

subsist, or have reality in any sense whatsoever, except as there are existences, actual or imagined, for them to hold between; and we cannot imagine anything except as we have a prior basis for it in actual experience. An ultimately independent realm of subsisting relationships has so far as I can see no meaning at all. Relations involve terms; and at least these terms *originate* in experience only by way of the concrete and the actual. Relations hold indeed, not between "things," but between specific distinguishable aspects of things. If I ask what is the relationship between an isosceles triangle and the north pole, or between the solar system and the last best seller, there is no meaning to the question until I go on to inquire, In what respect? But while it is only by abstracting thus some relevant aspect of character that I am able to discover a determinate relation, these aspects are in the first instance always embedded in the existing world.

Of course in being thus abstracted, a quality is on the way to being turned into a universal, and so brought within the realm within which logic moves. And it might be that such conceptualized products become themselves new terms of a different sort between which further relationships hold, at one remove or more from the concrete. This, if true, would not compromise my contention so far, since no universals can be found which do not have their starting point in existents. But as nearly as I can make out it is not true.

If relations in their primary intention are between specific real aspects of the existing world, it is equally so that our first step at any rate away from existents is through the imagination, which still deals with the particular, and operates only by separating and recombining definite qualities that are taken over from experience. It is not between abstract redness and greenness that I discover a relation of difference, but between a patch of red and a patch of green, sensed or imaged. Once found in the concrete, all the elements of the situation, including the relation, can be translated into conceptual terms; but the relation is *put* in the conceptual realm, not first discovered in it. Is now this to be taken as universally the case? Or is there a meaning in the comparison of two concepts *as such?*

There certainly appears to be some sense in which our conceptions, or our meanings, develop implications on a different level from those that hold in the world of things and agents. It is this that gives point to the claim that logic is an affair of human *reason*, or of the "laws of thought"—a claim not quite satisfactorily disposed of by the arguments of the neo-realists. We certainly do make *some* distinction between the natural sciences and logic, and feel that the "objectivity" of the two is not on altogether the same footing; it is an apparently well-grounded persuasion that "classes" are not to be found in nature, but are the outcome of human thinking. What exists is a number of individuals

with a great variety of relationships between them, among which is the eminently external and passive relationship involved in the possession of common traits; and it is necessary not only that there should be this similarity, but that the common traits should be *thought together* and their potential unity made explicit, before we get what is strictly a class term. Nature is not falsified by this procedure; classes embody something that is really so. But they embody it in a different way. The common characters in the outer world are found in particular existents, and there only; and it is just by reason of being thus particularized that they are able to play their part in the seething life of nature itself. In the class term they are removed from all this active participation in events, and are held just as innocuous and bloodless characters before the mind. But also by virtue of this removal from a divided existence they now can be brought into a form of unity new to them—a unity dependent upon conscious manipulation and recognition.

To a certain extent this does not differentiate logic from science. Science also is concerned to gather up the universal aspects of the world of nature in a form that does not as such have existence, as individuals exist. This is only to say, however, that science is not reality, but a description of reality, a form of thought or knowledge; and there is nothing against supposing the characteristics it transcribes to constitute the very laws of the existent and actively

functioning world. But when we turn to the particular relationships that are characteristically logical, it becomes more doubtful in what sense this statement remains true. Undoubtedly logic must be based on the discovery of objectively valid truths. But these truths are no longer supposed to reveal, as in the case of science, the actual machinery of the real world that makes the wheels go round. They provide, not for explaining events, but for explaining *inference*, which is a very different thing. The process whereby we attain to and validate by reason our scientific knowledge is quite other than the processes of nature herself, and exemplifies different laws, although our inferences must be based on truths about this very world of objective nature in order to have any relevancy to scientific fact.

To remove any appearance of conflict here, it may naturally be supposed therefore that when the content of the world becomes a conceptual construct on a new level of reality, it also becomes capable of showing a new set of relationships to other thought content; and that it is these new relationships that make it possible to reason, and so constitute the field of logic. Thus, it may be said, it is not enough for logic that we should have the mind dealing with particular characters of reality. If I take a blue color and compare it with a red, noting the dissimilarity, the result has no logical significance. It is merely one thing more I have discovered about the objective world in which colors exist. Or if I note

the time succession of two events, this time relationship is equally a new objective fact. No dealing with particulars has any logical value; this was the logical defect in the association doctrine. One thought may as a matter of fact call up another. But in so far we are simply on the plane of natural history and causality, and nothing in the way of logical compulsion can be got out of it; it gives no basis for inference. Inference is possible only as we deal, not with natural objects, but with artificial thought constructs or universals, that have no existence as such in the natural universe.

But while this seems indeed to be the fact, it does not when interpreted essentially change the thesis with which I started out. A comparison of "meanings," to be intelligible, has still to utilize, for the discovery of these new relationships, particular bits of concrete quality, though it uses them in new connections. The most obvious account of the matter here is to say that the relations within the world of meanings or of universals are reducible to the category of whole and part. "Mortal" is a part of my meaning when I think of "man," and it is in view of this that I am justified in predicating mortality of anything I accept as a man. But here we are not dispensing with the concrete. It can be determined whether a given quality is among the list that make up the concept man only as we particularize the meaning attached to the words; and the process of doing this is one that deals with specific bits of con-

tent, and not with some vague new kind of entity called a universal. The character of universality itself is not a source of peculiar relations, but is merely the will to extend these concrete connections beyond the case where they are intuited, and to infer that they are going to be found in other circumstances also; and accordingly the outcome is always a more or less probable "that," and never a "why," or an explanation.

There is another statement that might be suggested to stand for the relation peculiarly involved in the logical field—that in terms of *identity* of meaning. But it seems questionable whether we are justified in calling identity a relation at all. A relation with only one term is an anomaly at best. Nor do we seem justified in trying to make identity more intelligible by reducing it to an identity for human purposes, or to the possibility of practical substitution; for to state this we have to talk about the *same* purpose, and so use the word to be defined. It is simpler to say that identity stands merely for the *fact* that we do *not* discover any relation of difference when we look for it. This presupposes a complex situation; but the identity is not analyzable into this relational complexity. The identity of a thing is just itself; I really see no way of turning it into anything else. If indeed we reduce identity thus to quality or being, we also have to note that it is recognized *as* identical only under the conditions of repetition; and this is apparently the reason

why we tend to think of it as a relationship. But if we try to take it, again, as itself a relation between the two states of the identical object, or the two acts of recognition, we are stopped by the evident fact that these are *not* identical, but different.

Supposing it however to be granted that the preceding thesis is valid, and that relations have no being in any sense apart from particulars that presuppose an existing world, the original problem still remains. What is the being of relations *in* this world? It is to this that I propose now to turn briefly.

It is very probable that there are philosophers to whom a difficulty here will appear more or less gratuitous. To one who is accustomed to do his speculative thinking exclusively in logical terms, it may come to seem a matter of course that a relation should be accepted as an ultimate sort of entity, which has to be taken simply at its face value. In practice indeed such an attitude cannot well be avoided. Relations are in some sense real, and any attempt to eliminate them from the content of the universe will necessarily fail. Nevertheless a more empirical type of mind, accustomed to take the concrete and the existing as its standard of the real, will find some trouble in stopping at this point. It cannot easily avoid the feeling that relationships are left hanging in the air, outside the sort of universe in which it is most at home. How is one to figure to himself this "being" which *is* even though it does not

exist? At best the universe appears to have split up into two grades of reality, difficult to adjust mentally. This particular duality other philosophers may avoid by abandoning the notion of existence as a brute fact of being, and by defining "reality" simply in logical terms. But the "dualist" is prevented by his presuppositions—or perhaps by his mental limitations—from this resource; and accordingly he is apt to find the situation puzzling and unsatisfactory. It would flatter his prejudices were he able to conceive the reality of relations without being forced to posit a special realm of subsistence; and I propose accordingly now to canvass very tentatively such a possibility.

On the whole it would appear that categories roughly form a scale, at one end of which the particular difficulty here exploited tends to disappear. If we take the complex relationship of purpose, there seems to be a sense in which this has its sole being within a conscious unity of experience as an existent fact of feeling. It is not that purpose does not imply many things which are external to the self and its experience. But in its distinctive character end, or significance, or meaning, is a conscious whole, a sense of internal harmony and appreciation. Both end and means exist beyond this experienced whole. But they are purposive only in so far as they become cognitive elements bound together by their connection with an inner unity of feeling; apart from this, they would appear only as sequences

in an unmeaning universe. This position may need to be qualified presently. But meanwhile it seems to have a sufficient measure of truth, at least, to relieve in this case the difficulty about the independent being of relations—independent, that is, in the sense that they are not qualifications of a single unified experience that has the status of existence.

It is when we pass to the other end of the scale, and consider the simplest and most ultimate relations such as that of difference, that the point of the difficulty becomes most apparent. For *that which* we think in the case of difference seems to be something that falls between many realities which do not, and some of which to all appearance cannot, belong together in a single experienced whole. Is it possible to interpret this without falling back on a status of subsistence that does not as such "exist"?

In looking for an answer, we may start from what lies closest at hand. "Difference," for the theory I have advocated, must somehow be present as a form of mental content, or there could be no basis for the apprehension of the essence by means of which we think it; what then is the relation of difference immediately *experienced as?* I can see no way of avoiding the conclusion that there is such a thing as a specific *feeling* of difference, just as there is a feeling of redness. There are present to my mind two contents, each what it is, with its own distinctive nature; and when I pass from the one of these to the other, I get a new and peculiar experience of shock

which *is* what experientially I mean by their difference. There are real dialectical difficulties that such a statement suggests. But when I look to the inner experience itself, there is nothing more that I can personally discover. By this I do not mean, I should want to make perfectly clear, to reduce reality to separate bits of "pure" experience, or of mind stuff. Experience is actually the unified fact it seems to be, and difference is an element within its wholeness. It is not the addition of a third thing which, under pretence of bringing together what was there before, really adds a new entity to be related; it simply identifies a piece of the connective tissue of what comes to us in the first place as a one-in-many. But as such it is, again, itself embodied in feeling existence, and not a new form of being.

And now whatever other objections this may raise, it does at least suggest an answer to the immediate problem. On such a showing, there *is* no entity which "subsists" outside the realm of the existent. What is real is on the one hand the two objects of cognition, and on the other the feeling which they arouse when their "natures" are reviewed in succession by the mind. In the object these natures are concretely embodied, and each is what it happens to be. In experience the same characters attach to feeling or sensation. But also they here give rise to another feeling, which has its own specific character; and the judgment of difference is the automatic reference of this new character, along with the original contents, to

an objective situation. In this statement there is left no reality of a tenuous sort "between" the two existents. And if it be said that this is to deny objectivity to the relation, I do not think that it really does so in any undesirable sense. The objective character of difference is precisely the fact, not that something mysteriously subsists which connects two reals, but that these reals do have each its own positive character, which characters, entering into experience in the form of cognitive marks, do actually and invariably have the result which we call the feeling of difference. And if this is all there is to the matter, it is understandable why such a character as that of difference seems so external to the differing entities, and leaves them unchanged when their difference is perceived. For from the standpoint of these entities themselves the sole reality is their separate characters, and they enter into a unity only for a perceiving conscious "mind."

As a matter of fact there is a conceivable hypothesis on which more than this is true. Difference as a fact of feeling might actually be present in the outer world as well, if we were willing to interpret such a world as itself a larger experience similar to our own. But this would involve a metaphysical reconstruction which many philosophers would not accept. And it is unnecessary to a defence of objectivity, in the sense in which anything that stands for the uniform outcome of definite conditions may be regarded as a revelation of the real constitution of

the world, something objectively grounded or valid, whether or not it "copies" the nature of the extra-human fact.

The apparent "externality" of such relations as difference and similarity, in the sense that they do not seem to *make* a difference to the related terms, suggests meanwhile that some further explanation will be called for when we turn to still another sort of relation, which stands midway between the two cases hitherto considered. For there are relations which, while they hold between reals that seemingly do not belong to any existential unity, yet do appear to make a difference to the character of these reals. Causality is a relation which to all appearance may connect two objects that in point of existence are separate. But if we were to try to get rid of causality also as a real "subsisting" element in the world beyond us, we might be asked to explain how it happens then that through the presence of a cause physical things are actually altered in their internal character. What is itself nothing cannot be the medium for making real alterations.

The easiest way to answer this would of course be to deny that a difference actually is made. Causation is itself nothing but a relation of the sort that does *not* alter the related terms—a relation of invariable succession, to take the simplest theory; the only reals are the separate items and their order. But while this would be accepted as a truism by perhaps the majority of philosophers, I am not my-

self disposed to adopt it without qualification. It seems to me very plain that, whatever the obscurities of its meaning, there is a sense attaching to the term causality in its everyday usage which cannot be satisfied to drop the reference to a connecting bond, or to effective agency. "Cause" simply does not mean to the natural mind what it tends to mean for a scientific definition; and even the scientist is continually lapsing in his unguarded moments into the more familiar notion. To leave out of consideration the less easily verifiable matter of causation in the physical world, in human concerns, at any rate, it is quite impossible to come within hailing distance of our ordinary human meanings without assuming that men's ideas and plans and purposes are actually made different from what they would have been by the intrusion of outside realities. If arguments in the mouths of others do not sometimes "change my mind," if the conduct of my neighbor does not set up reactions of friendship or hostility which furnish actual working motives, if the presence of appetizing food does not tempt me to eat, if these and a thousand other instances do not imply an active and effective influence between realities that are not in any verifiable sense within a single felt unity of experience, then we might as well give up trying to describe the facts of human experience and history in a form that represents what they are "*experienced as.*"

But an examination of this instance of human or

interhuman causality will perhaps go to show that the case is not so different from the preceding ones as would appear. Let us suppose that, when my doctor orders rest and change, I decide to follow his advice. Here we have—assuming of course the legitimacy of our ordinary beliefs—an event, the doctor's prescription, lying outside the range of my own inner unity of feeling, which nevertheless is not merely the temporal predecessor of a change in my conduct, but which I can hardly avoid speaking of as an actual influence that in some sense helps to bring it about. But here also, on a closer scrutiny, the necessity for a subsistent relation hanging in mid-air between two forms of existence will tend to disappear. *Within* the experience there is a relation present—that of purpose. And it may be conjectured that the notion of influence, or effectiveness, has its source in this relationship of conscious means to conscious end, or of the steps of a process to its active fulfilment, which purpose implies—a relationship that actually involves in an empirically verifiable form the sense of a connecting bond which is the essence of the common notion of causation. Meanwhile in this inner experience of purpose, the part played by the outer fact as an existence offers no particular mystery. It enters into the situation only in the passive rôle of being known, or of having its nature and existence recognized. This nature exists in its own right outside of knowledge; its recognition enters into the play of human purpose as a

motive; and beyond this no further relation between the outer fact and the inner unity appears to be required. It is enough to recognize that the world is such that, for the life of mind, things may become causes by being translated into ideal terms of knowledge, and brought into contact with a developing desire or purpose; the sole factors involved are an inner—and existential—experience of active purpose, external reals each exactly what it is, and the possibility of knowing these reals on the terms set forth in a preceding section. Meanwhile for the physical processes themselves, out of connection with human motivation, we may if we choose fall back on the orthodox scientific formula which dispenses with active agency altogether, unless, once more, we reinterpret metaphysically the material world after a fashion that makes attributable to it likewise the inner experience of purposive change.

The same general method of approach may next be tried in connection with what stands usually as another very fundamental relation. Since we can "know" extension, the spatial character must also, on the basis of the present theory, enter as a quality of feeling experience itself. And accordingly the natural suggestion will be, that the spatial character which we perceive is the projection of that character of "extensity" which there are grounds for holding to be a property of certain sensory experiences.

At this point, however, questions are bound to arise which did not appear in the same form in the

case of causality. What is the relation of this spatial character of sensation to the real space which is an object of knowledge? Is the sensation itself *in* space? How are we to describe the nature of space itself on its objective side? Is it a quality, or a relation, or is it, possibly, something different from both of these, and a unique sort of entity?

We may turn to this last alternative as a starting point. If it be the true one, and if space is to be conceived as a container or envelope in which things exist, then, it will be noticed, we have on our hands still another sort of being analogous to, but distinguishable from, the supposed "subsistence" of relations. Philosophy has found this a difficult conception to defend, though to common sense it has usually seemed fairly obvious; is there any suggestion here that the present thesis seems to offer?

Let us suppose that color sensation, for example, has, as it appears to have, a coincident quality which we may call extensity, and that extensity, like color, is instinctively used to qualify the reality with which in perception we find ourselves in contact. We see things originally, then, as possessing a vague extensity or spread-outness. This character I do not see how we can easily avoid calling in the first instance a quality, rather than a relation; it is something which seems actually to be *in* the things. But it is not difficult to conjecture how the notion of space as a container—which again is commonly thought of as quasi-substantial rather than as rela-

tional—might come from this original form of experience. Color attaches only to this or that piece of reality in particular, because color is not uniform, but differs qualitatively. But extensities do not so differ. Moreover they are perceptually continuous; it is not extensity which marks one object off from another, but the differentiating qualities of color or tangibility in which special limits of extensity have their source. Accordingly while, when we are actually limiting our attention to a single object, extension still seems to be a part of it, a wider view will tend to separate it from an exclusive connection with particulars, and attach it to the world at large; and it thus comes to be regarded as a medium for things rather than as belonging to the things themselves. Since the spatial continuity goes beyond all individual objects and includes them, it is natural that these objects should be regarded as *in* a space which is detachable from them in their particularity.

And this supplies a reason for the apparent difference between sensations and percepts in their relation to space. The former I think we must say are "spatial"; but we certainly hesitate to speak of them as "in space." And this is a natural consequence of the dissimilarity of the two situations cognitively. When, at a very late date, we learn to recognize the "psychological" fact of sensation, it is only through a process of isolating the sensation as a separate bit of feeling—a process freed from direct subservience to those organic ends under whose influence is built

up a connected world of objects; and here accordingly extensity will find no place except inside the sensation as its quality. Before space can belong to the "world," we must have such a world inclusive of lesser realities; and this is only given in perception, not in introspective analysis. The sensation therefore, since it does not belong as such to the inclusive whole of the perceptual field, will not be "in space." Meanwhile we may note once more that even in the case of percepts we have only to change our point of view to bring space back as a quality of objects. It is equally natural to say that an object is *in* space, and that it *has* a spatial character or extensity; it depends upon whether we are thinking of it alone or in a context.

If the account just given of the notion of an all-encompassing, featureless, and non-existent space be regarded as the true one, the justification of this notion will appear to be in so far doubtful. Space ought not to be expected to show properties markedly different from the extensity out of which it is built. But in its most verifiable form, at least, extensity belongs to existents, since *within* experience it is always, like color, a character of concrete feelings. So also it is naturally regarded as a form of existence in so far as it is attributed to particular objects. And its visual continuity does not really contradict this, since even the seeing of extensity *between* things must have its existential basis. In terms merely of the concrete visual experience,

therefore, there appears no necessary reason to suppose that space remains in the absence of existences that possess extensity, especially since there is no compelling ground so far for holding that the ideal mark or essence which we call extensity must needs be a real replica of anything outside the mind at all.

The more solid reasons that can be used to justify the notion of a universal space are chiefly two in number. One has to do with the supposed need for regarding space as infinite or endless; and a consideration of this will have to be postponed a little. But also in connection with a second main psychological source of the spatial experience, which has not yet been referred to, a plausible turn can be given to the claim that space is an actual continuum distinguishable from the things that occupy it. I do not profess to know just how a spatial world would feel if it were lacking in the visual quality which it possesses for men who see. I cannot readily conceive of it as having that non-temporal spread-outness which is its distinctive visual character. But it would still possess a general character such as would lend itself to the notion of an all-container. This character may be described as the *possibility of movement.* So long as our knowledge is supposed to be objective and realistic at all, the continuity of space must be objectively grounded at least in this sense, that it represents a real opportunity of continuous motion; and the simplest way of conceiving this might be in terms of the traditional idea of space.

But on examination this conclusion would again seem not to follow; there is after all no real requirement here that space as a whole should have a quasi-existential being. We doubtless under the influence of our prepossessions will be disposed to translate a possibility of movement into "room to move in." But the bare experience of motion does not involve this. Apart from a possible "feeling" of movement which is certainly quite different from "space," it is difficult to detect here anything present that is not reducible to a succession of experiences more or less differently qualified; and the possibility of suffering such a change of quality has no evident connection with the need for postulating an encompassing entity called space.

On the terms so far canvassed, therefore, it appears not only that the notion of an independent space is of doubtful validity, but also that extensity, the basis of space, is itself not a relation, but a quality. Visually the space between two objects is not primarily their relation, but another stretch of spatial extension. If therefore we speak of spatial relations, as of course we may and do, it would seem that we must refer, not to space itself, but to relations that have space as their source or fundamentum. Any quality may thus give rise to relations which are dependent on it; thus colors are related in terms of their relative likenesses and intensities. But spatial relations are of particular importance in human life, because of their exact quantitative char-

acter. This seems a sufficient reason for the prevalence of a relational theory of space; it is mainly in quantitative terms that space is a *useful* concept, for the scientist or the practical man.

But while such a theory may be justified for certain purposes, it ought not to be interpreted as meaning that space is *nothing but* relations, unless we are prepared arbitrarily to ignore altogether that crude quality of extensity which the concept certainly involves. And it is relevant to notice, further, that these same quantitative relations are separable from spatial conditions, which is another reason for holding that they *apply* to or grow out of extension, rather than constitute it. We accordingly are justified for our special problem in turning here from the spatial field, to the more general fact of quantity or number, as that which supplies the major part at least of those properties that have led men to regard space as a relation. Here without any doubt we are dealing with relationships; and the question is to what extent, if any, they modify the conclusions previously reached.

I shall make no pretensions here to examine the extraordinarily subtle new philosophies of mathematics—a task for which I have neither the space nor the ability. It may be that these have revolutionary metaphysical consequences which I am not able to appreciate. But after all they supposedly must rest in the end upon relatively plain and empirical insights, if they are to have more than a

merely technical value for the mathematician's professional problems. Our more familiar judgments in the matter cannot be safely disregarded therefore; and these seemingly can be expressed in terms of relations not essentially different in kind from those already considered. Thus it would seem pretty close to our ordinary notions if we were to say that the reality of quantitative relations turns on the perception of equalities or inequalities involved in an indefinite possibility of measurement or counting. I do not mean of course that number is itself reducible to the psychological act of counting, though in its abstracter form its material would seem to be supplied directly by such acts. I see however no decisive reason against supposing that the essence of number itself may not be reducible to a complex system of equalities of which the act of counting is the condition; and equality is evidently the same general type of relation as the relation of difference. Not quite so simple is the relationship of serial "order." But at least there seems no reason to suppose that "nextness," and "between," and whatever further elements the conception may involve, violate the analogy of other simple relations by refusing to be reduced in the end to distinctive "feelings" that give them their place in experience, and so in knowledge.

Meanwhile the very tentative and imperfect character of the above account is of the less importance, in that, for what is the most persuasive evidence for

a "subsistent" world, we have to turn to a further consideration, which has so far been left in the background—a consideration that applies to all relations alike, but that becomes particularly insistent in the case of number. This is the fact that in some sense relations plainly range far beyond the boundaries of any world that we can think of as now existing; and what can this mean except that they are to be conceived as having "being" apart from what exists? Accordingly the present thesis demands, as its final and most difficult problem, that we have something to say about relational connections in so far as they are possible only, and not actual. What is the nature of that infinite host of relationships of all possible sorts which no one ever perceives, though they might be perceived under appropriate conditions?

Before turning to this explicitly, there is a related question to which it is easier first to give an answer—the question of *significance*. The most general and colorless account of these truths of relationship which no one yet has thought, is to this effect, that the world is one in which there exist possibilities not yet realized. That such possibilities exist need not in its practical interpretation imply that they are somehow now existent, in an inclusive and fully developed consciousness, or as a timeless world of being; it means precisely that the world is yet unfinished, and that existence is capable of receiving additions. Possibilities, alike in terms of what can

be done and of what is capable of being thought of as a "truth," are as a human concept absolutely limited to begin with by the present or "existent" facts. From these we have to start. They furnish the terms for relationships to hold between, without which these relations would be simply null; and they limit of course the possibilities of actual change and achievement. But along with its acquaintance with the relations that hold between existents up to date, psychical or physical, and that are discovered by direct resort to experience, the mind is capable of abstracting and manipulating the data of experience, and of thinking them together in numberless new ways, which represent not the actual, but the imaginable. For its data it again is limited to existents; but through the power of imaginative construction it can transcend the actual, and enter the realm of the possible or conceivable. And the practical significance of this is, that in doing so it opens the way for existence itself to change or grow. It does not simply offer possibilities in the way of novelties of thought; these can be used to extend the range of existence itself, and to guide us, if held in check by a proper sense both of the "real" and the "desirable," in bringing about actual alterations in the world, such as again lead to fresh truths.

And now this constitutes, I am disposed to hold, the final truth of the matter as well; the possibility of being discovered in the process of growing ex-

perience *is* all the status that the relations in question possess. If, after a relation has been discovered, some being were to be found attaching to it which is incapable of being reduced to existential terms, this position would indeed be impossible to maintain. But I have attempted to suggest that such may not be the case. The relation of difference perceived between two objects is not a preëxisting—or presubsisting—entity. It is *nothing but* the possibility of the appearance of a feeling of difference under appropriate circumstances, or the *fact that* it will appear. For relations actually to be at all, there is needed the interposition of a perceiving mind, which therefore in a real sense actually creates them; though they still remain objective in the sense that the mind cannot create at will and out of nothing, and what relations it will add to the real universe is conditioned by the essences which in this universe are already found embodied. The sole reality is thus the existing world, plus the unlimited possibility of growth; and this last I take to be an ultimate concept reducible to nothing other than itself.

We have, accordingly, no need to postulate an actual infinity of number, for example, existent or subsistent. The infinity of number stands simply for the indefinite possibility of counting. Beings who are capable of counting might disappear, in which case infinity would be meaningless. But abstractly there is nothing to prevent the act from being carried as far as we please, since in the mere concept of

activity as such no conditions are involved, in the shape of a subject-matter, to check or limit it. Similarly in the case of division. We might very conceivably reach a physical limit to the possibility of subdivision. But ideally the process of division can go on forever, since a definition of division cannot consistently find a place for its own negation. In both cases, a thing is "true" of any stage in the process which we should actually find there *if* we arrived at that stage. But this again does not mean that it possesses a mystical sort of being prior to its discovery; it is merely that actual rules of operation may be so defined that, if carried out, the resulting facts would also be found to be of a specific sort through their dependence on the given data. And along with this, and with the same status, may also be certain logical consequences of the nature of the rules themselves, in terms of their refusal to accept a limit. Meanwhile, in general, any difference there may seem to be between mathematics and, for example, history, is simply due, apart from the greater facilities for short-cut methods, to the fact that in the former case the conditions are arbitrarily defined and limited in abstract or conceptual terms, and so are freed from the contingency that attends the process of development in the concrete world.

In the notion of infinite space—to return briefly to an earlier point—there is an additional complication. But it is due to the fact that we fail to keep separate the quality of extensity, and the logical

property of quantitative relationship; neither of them when taken by itself gives rise to insuperable difficulties of thought. Extensity as a concrete quality is not infinite. It belongs to whatever existent it happens to belong to, and in the absence of existents it disappears entirely. It is the ideal process of imagination which is responsible for the thought of space as interminable. But here, since actual space has no content apart from existence, which may so far as we know be limited, we are merely concerned with the abstract notion of addition; and our inability therefore to think space as limited means, again, only that the process of addition is not limited by anything in its own nature.

What has been said of space will apply in principle to time as well, where the experienced fact is the quality of duration which belongs to any psychological process, and which, like extensity, is used to interpret the object of knowledge. Time also, therefore, does not exist as an envelope of events; it attaches to such things as it actually is found belonging to. Through its character as continuous, however, it readily lends itself, like space, to the notion of an all-container. And accordingly we come to think of different and experientially discontinuous realities as all having their place in a common flow of time; whereas the more accurate statement would seem to be that realities beyond my temporally unified experience, while they may themselves also possess the temporal character, form

part of a single time process only in the sense that they come into teleological relationships with my life at some particular temporal point within it through being known, and thus become amenable to a unified conceptual treatment in terms of the quantitative relationships which duration, like extensity, generates. Of course, since these relationships are objectively grounded, it is still true that the conception of an inclusive time process may be phenomenally valid. But it is less adequate nevertheless to the ultimate nature of things than the conception of an intercausal or purposive unity of action, mediated through cognition, on the part of existences which individually have the form of duration.

SOME METAPHYSICAL IMPLICATIONS

THE present essay professes to be concerned primarily with knowledge, and its analysis as an aspect of experience. There are some advantages in thus limiting the problem. Knowledge clearly does as an experience have certain definable characters; and while it is true that most questions in philosophy cannot be finally settled without reference to our total view of things, it also seems apparent that no subordinate aspect can safely, beyond a certain point, be falsified in the interests of harmony with a speculative system. I venture to think that this is what has happened much too frequently in theories of knowledge. These, under the name of knowledge, offer for our acceptance something often very hard to recognize; and the reason for setting aside a more natural description is precisely the difficulties it is supposed to occasion for an ultimate metaphysical theory. If we are at liberty thus to alter apparent facts at will when they do not suit our speculative purposes, the way is open to almost anything in philosophy; it is safer to let the facts speak for themselves, without considering at first too nicely their bearing on other and remoter problems. Nevertheless I realize that it will be an obstacle to the acceptance of a theory in case it is not possible

to see, vaguely at any rate, the direction in which its implications point. And accordingly, as a work of supererogation, I shall in conclusion indicate what seems to me the general view of reality which an account of knowledge such as I have been defending suggests. But before coming to this, it may be well to make two explanatory digressions.

The first of these has to do with the sense in which I conceive that epistemology may be used as a source for ontological conclusions. This whole possibility has recently been subjected to a vigorous attack by the American neo-realists; and with much of the spirit of this attack, if I understand it rightly, I think I should agree. If, when we talk of the logical priority of epistemology, we intend to make the claim that before we have any possibility of knowing we must know that we know, and use this somehow as a premise from which the knowledge is to be deduced, the claim I should say is manifestly absurd. We begin by knowing; and if we had to justify knowledge before we could know, we should never get a start.

But it seems to me quite possible along with this to hold that, after knowing has in turn become an object of investigation and its conditions have been discovered, this new and empirical knowledge may conceivably lead us to important conclusions about the real world itself, and so justify to an extent the historical place that epistemology has had. I am led to think this, however, because I believe that the

known world is not, primarily, a neutral realm of propositions intuitively perceived to be true; these propositions are propositions *about* a reality not immediately embedded in the knowledge process. The knowledge with which we start as a presupposition is in the form of *belief*, such as implies a certain separation between the things affirmed and the believing act; and it is for this reason that a possibility always exists that belief may be modified when we come to note the conditions under which alone we find knowledge taking place. Not of course that we ought to waive belief until we have deduced or justified its possibility. But if knowledge means the holding of opinions about a world in some real sense transcending the knower and his knowing experience, the fact that empirically we do—not that we *must*—approach reality only by a certain discoverable method, does very strongly suggest the advisability of holding off from a final interpretation until this method of approach has been carefully examined. Such an examination will reveal, at least, that our knowledge of the outer world is probable knowledge only, and therefore subject to doubt and possible revision.

This last introduces the second point of digression; and I should like to emphasize it once more in view especially of what I am going on to say. "Dualism" does not lend itself to that ideal of logical or demonstrative certainty at which philosophy has so frequently aimed. I have already considered the

nature and degree of assurance which is possible in human belief, and to me this seems sufficient for all our genuine needs. But it is not theoretical certainty; unquestionably it leaves the way open to sceptical doubt. There are various ways in which rival philosophies may seek to avoid such an admission. But a dualism which recognizes the distinction between knowledge as a process in the inner life of an individual, and reality as mediately known, must needs admit that no ideas of fallible human beings can possibly avoid the chance of being mistaken.

And to this I am compelled in candor to add a more personal confession. I find myself growing more and more alive to the difficulty of reaching conclusions about the ultimate nature of reality which stand much chance on purely reasoned grounds of carrying very strong conviction to other minds. When one considers all the queer obsessions and blind spots and ineffectualities of the human intellect even at its best—and the persuasion that such things are not important for the philosopher is one conspicuous example of their working—it seems a bit audacious to make very insistent claims to the possession of assured knowledge in a sphere where our beliefs are only in a vague way open to testing. What a given man will accept here will almost certainly be determined in considerable part by considerations other than strictly necessary ones. A particular construction will appeal to his imaginative sense of beauty, to his religious or his social per-

suasions of significance, perhaps to no more than his possessive instincts and a pride in his own personal originality as a thinker; and if his road is not barred by too great difficulties and inconsistencies, he will find the evidence enough for his own private conviction. But it ought not to be hard for him to understand how to others it may make a different appeal. Often a very slight shift of emphasis will be found to alter substantially a philosophy's persuasiveness. I think it therefore not unlikely that the caution which the world has always shown in the presence of metaphysical conclusions, and which indeed each philosopher has practiced toward the conclusions of the rest, will come increasingly, with the growth of self-knowledge, to be felt by thinkers toward their own systems also, in so far as these go beyond a verifiable analysis of experienced facts and meanings.

With this preamble, I may proceed to say a few words about what on the whole appear to me the most natural implications of the dualism which I have been defending, in terms of a theory of reality. Most of these go back to one point in particular. The theory has presupposed that every character which we can assign to the real world must first be found within experience—as a character, that is, of feeling stuff. We know accordingly that existence in this particular form is possible for them; and consequently, if nothing further needed to be considered, the easiest hypothesis would be that, in so

far as such characters can justify their claim to belong to the object known, they will have there too the same sort of embodiment we can verify within experience, and that the world of nature is therefore in its substance akin to the world of feeling.

There appears to be no logical necessity for this conclusion. I feel indeed some hesitation in supposing that an identical quality may characterize two entirely different sorts of stuff, feeling on the one hand, and something we call matter on the other. But I really cannot see that this hesitation is a sufficient reason for denying that the possibility exists. And it is undoubtedly so that the belief in matter is a belief which in the course of nature we actually find ourselves entertaining when we start out to philosophize. It therefore has a presumption in its favor, on the principles I have been professing; the suggestion on the other hand that the true reality of the outer world is one of mind or spirit, comes with a certain shock of paradox.

But as a partial offset to this, it also should be noticed that from another and familiar standpoint the claim is not so strange in appearance after all. I refer of course to the religious consciousness. This is a part of normal human experience, as truly as are the beliefs of common sense; and it therefore cannot be treated as cavalierly as we perhaps are justified in treating the merely dialectical conclusions of philosophy. And in a way this second standpoint has even a certain right to priority here. Our

everyday belief in matter is after all primarily practical rather than theoretical in its import. It is not in the first place an attempt to state what reality is, but a descriptive formula for the natural conditions which the life process has to presuppose. The other point of view, on the contrary, does profess to be to an extent an account of the true nature of things. It is on the whole the distinct tendency of religion, in its more intimate forms, not merely to believe that a being akin to the human spirit exists behind the realm of nature, but to hold that the natural world itself, instead of being the fully real and ultimate fact it seems to be, is, in comparison with the deeper realities of the spiritual life, a more or less unsubstantial and phenomenal show. It is true that religion seldom goes so far as to attempt a detailed reconstruction of our natural belief; and probably it could not do this without compromising to an extent its own persuasiveness. It tends to supplant other attitudes rather than to make itself inclusive of them. Nevertheless the fact remains that the notion of the relative unreality of matter is one not unfamiliar to certain normal human moods.

There is of course a second alternative to the one I am considering, which in the abstract would be equally consistent with the theory of essences. It might be that the characters present in the conscious life which the mind refers to reality are only, as Spencer would say, "symbolic," and that they do not as such exist at all in the outer world. And the

fact that modern science in its metaphysical moods has so frequently found itself pointed in this direction, deserves consideration. I have nothing to add here to what I have already said about the justification of a more positive form of belief. The abstract possibility of agnosticism does indeed remain, and will probably never cease to offer an intellectual attraction to the man whose natural faith is small. But on the other hand no insuperable difficulties seem to lie in the way of a measure at least of gnosticism; and consequently there is no good reason why those in whom the tendency to believe is stronger—and they constitute the vast majority of the race—should not indulge it so long as due caution is shown. An over-insistent demand for a sort of evidence which human experience does not supply, is not to be taken as proof of a judicious mind. Accordingly we find that the working scientist almost universally, in spite of a disposition on the part of theorists to play tentatively with a philosophical scepticism, in practice does not hesitate to accept *some* cognitive characters of the world as real and objective—relational if not qualitative ones. And at least the fact that scientific results pretty nearly always leave us with a universe very different from that in which the common man believes, is a reason for declining to reject too hastily any thesis because it does not fully square with our first interpretation.

I conceive, then, that the hypothesis to which the

analysis of knowledge points is one which, in spite of its initial strangeness from the standpoint of practical beliefs, has some claim to the attention of the philosopher. When it comes to setting forth however in any detail the form of such a theory, I am afraid that the outcome is apt to seem more plausible to one who starts with a general bias in its favor, than to a different type of mind; certainly I should not expect it to be widely accepted purely under the compulsion of logical argument. I propose to do no more here than suggest a few of its very general features, as these seem to follow most naturally from the present point of view.

Both religion and logical analogy coincide in pointing to the "self" as the more inclusive concept which the attributing of essences to nature will imply. All experience for us takes the form of a personal property; it is a unified whole of feeling, which in some interpretation or other we are bound to recognize as "ours." It is most natural therefore, if we have started out by using the connection of cognitive essences with feeling experience to interpret the outer reality to which they are referred, to accept at the same time whatever additional character "experience" may be found to bear, and to regard in consequence this feeling substance as constituting the life of a personal being more ultimate than the human self, and co-extensive with the unity of the world of nature. The efforts of philosophy to say precisely what we mean by a self, and to

free the concept from ambiguities, have indeed, it must be granted, been less successful than we should like to see them. But this is no sufficient reason for declining to admit its reality. We are perfectly well assured that the self is an actual fact in the world, however difficult it may be of definition; and for any *significance* at least that things may bear, it is an absolutely central and fundamental sort of fact.

Up to a certain point, there is indeed no insuperable difficulty in giving a description of the nature of the self. As an experienced fact, it is a unity of a fairly definite and verifiable sort, characterized by such things as a present felt unity of the conscious field, a sense of intimate connection with certain portions of the past, and, in particular, a range of purposes or ends which anticipate in a definable way the future. And empirical philosophy has sometimes been satisfied to stop here, as if the problem of the self had thus been met. To this however the objection is, that the self most certainly appears to be something in addition to the actual processes that make up the stream of conscious experiencing. We *are* more than we feel, or say, or do. There lie potentialities in the background which are not fully realized at any given moment, and perhaps may never be realized completely; and these to all appearance supply the source from which in some sense the realized facts of experience in particular spring. It is only by ignoring these more fundamental facts in their relation to the hidden springs of conduct, that

we can be satisfied to define the self solely in terms of the surface phenomena of the conscious life.

It is however one thing to recognize that something here is present below the surface of conscious happenings, and another to give a rational and convincing account of what this more fundamental something is. I do not myself feel able to supply such an account in any form that will escape essential obscurities. There are two main directions in which to turn. It may be that there is some substantial entity underlying the phenomenal life, such as common sense and—in the past—philosophy have agreed to call a "soul." This has the advantage that it seems to be the mind's natural answer to the problem; its disadvantage is that the nature of such a soul substance, and its connection with the empirical self, is in the strictest sense unthinkable and unimaginable.

The other alternative is to follow the lead of the scientific experience, when this is reinterpreted, of course, in terms of the hypothesis we are presupposing. There is an empirical basis for the soul life actually given us—the bodily organism namely—which does account in detail, up to a point, for many of its peculiarities. And if the reality of the physical world be the life of God himself, then we might be led to conjecture that the reality of the deeper self may lie directly in the depths of the divine. I am inclined to think that religion would

find itself sympathetic with such a view, if, again, we do not press too far for a detailed statement.

And at least in this way one metaphysical difficulty is eliminated; it is no longer necessary to try to think the reality of a "substance" whose nature is by definition unthinkable. Back of our own life is a deeper-lying consciousness which serves as its foundation; but the reason for postulating a soul for God himself has disappeared. *Man* needs a soul only because empirically the unity of consciousness is not self-sufficient. But God, so religion certainly would maintain, is fully conscious of all the conditions of his life. For him there is no mysterious and subconscious background; and accordingly no reason here exists, as it does in the case of man, for refusing to define the nature of the self in terms of a unified conscious experience, whose "existence" is just the feeling stuff of experience itself. For it is not this existence in the form of feeling which seems to call for a further substance to serve as its foundation, but the positive reasons we have, where our own feelings are concerned, for looking further for their preconditions.

It remains true however that the special *relationship* that holds between God and the human life is still opaque, since in the nature of the case nothing in our experience can fully cover it. We should be led to say in general that a certain province of reality is put in some measure under the control of that conscious intelligence and will in which for its

own awareness a human self consists, so that thereby it achieves the possibility not only of coming into contact with and affecting other parts of the world, but of developing the resources that have been entrusted to it; but this undoubtedly leaves many things obscure. But so, I feel very certain, does any other possible account of the matter which does not get rid of the difficulty artificially by the popular philosophical device of leaving out some of the factors involved. The relation of the physical organism to the conscious life which evidently is dependent on it, and which to all appearance is concerned in its own physical fortunes, is still one of the unsettled problems of philosophy.

If we turn from the self as a human concept to its use for the interpretation of the divine, other difficulties will of course appear. These last however do not seem to be insuperable, provided we have once convinced ourselves that the self concept is as such not unintelligible. In part they are due to the imaginative difficulty of grasping a reality so vast as on any showing God's life must be. The conception of an experience comprehensive enough to include the multitudinous facts of the physical world, is bound naturally to over-awe our human attempts to realize it. But I see no way to escape the conviction that the world is on any interpretation much too big not to baffle the concrete imagination.

Meanwhile I suspect that the difficulty is increased unnecessarily by our tendency to choose for

the understanding of God's life a type of experience which is not best fitted for the purpose. We as human beings are compelled to learn progressively and piecemeal the conditions of existence. We naturally therefore think of experience first of all as an intellectual turning of attention in this or that particular direction; and on such terms the task that is laid upon God may well seem prohibitive. But if we suppose these natural conditions, as a part of his own nature, to be open to him directly without the need for first discovering them, we may conceive of the facts as entering into his experience in a different and more unified form. Such an experience is possible even to the human self in proportion to the completeness of his control over the conditions of his activity—in playing a game, for example, in which he is expert; here we do not find it so difficult to conceive a fairly wide complexity of content present in a genuine unity of appreciation. Or compare again the difference between the piecemeal and serial character involved in the critical judgment of a work of art, and the wholeness and comprehensiveness of the aesthetic experience itself.

A second source of difficulty in the conception of God as a self is dialectical rather than imaginative. Here I think it would be found that a great deal of the trouble is due to the desire to apply to God the traditional attributes of infinity or of absoluteness. So long as one subscribes to the philosophical prejudice against taking God as less than the whole, he will

undoubtedly find great difficulty in regarding him also as a self, though I do not say that the difficulty is insurmountable. But it will at least make his path smoother if he is willing to recognize the apparent implications of our natural view of knowledge and its object—that the world of nature is a reality distinguishable, and in a real degree separable, from the inner life of the human beings who know it, and that it has a unity of a special sort into which, as the unsuccessful labor of science and philosophy has shown, it is not easy to incorporate directly, in scientific terms, these human lives as a portion of its component stuff. And in so far as God is regarded as the interpretation of nature, to him also the same judgment will apply.

That the notion of a finite God, in this technical sense, is also not lacking in difficulties of its own, is of course undeniable; but it is not necessary to put the conception in a form to aggravate them. Thus the first objection likely to appeal to the religious consciousness does not seem inherent in the notion. If God be taken as existentially limited not only by other and human selves, but by a further and more fundamental background of brute being which hampers his activity, it will reasonably be urged that this tends to weaken that assured faith in the triumph of the good which is unquestionably one important motive in the religious life. Factual arguments are not wanting for this limitation; but there is nothing in the abstract to require it. And if we

do suppose that the essential conditions of existence are identified with God's own nature, there is nothing in the reality of other and dependent selves to jeopardize the outcome, even if we grant to such selves a measure of free initiative, and the power therefore to determine, within such narrow limits as the facts of experience warrant, the future course of affairs. It is perfectly conceivable, and not inconsistent with our practical knowledge about the relation between man and nature, that the fundamental lines of progress should be determined and made certain of success, while yet there should be within this general scheme a wide variety of alternative possibilities, dependent for their actualization upon the form that human coöperation takes, but all alike issuing in a result that approves itself to our sense of values.

In the light of this general conception one perhaps can meet in part another and more metaphysical difficulty. If we placate the fear lest values be impermanent, I think it may be regarded as the natural demand of human nature that the future should open up real accessions of good, and that a place should therefore be provided for novelty and growth in the ultimate universe. It is true that heaven has mostly been conceived in terms of rest. But in such a doctrine a note of weariness and relaxation is evident which, though excusable as a reaction against the life of toil which men now are forced to undergo, ought plainly not to be allowed

to settle our final religious convictions; and I think that it does not in fact represent the best religious insight. As we know the good in human terms, it is bound up everywhere with activity and change; and it is difficult, and probably impossible, to conceive of it concretely when change has been eliminated. While therefore idealists have usually insisted that religion aims at the all-complete and the non-temporal, I think it likely that they are in reality attributing to the religious mind needs that are primarily speculative or metaphysical.

That the mind may feel a certain natural reluctance when asked to think the appearance in the universe of something not there before, I am not disposed to deny. And if the conception of an eternal and all-inclusive reality were itself free from difficulties, it might have a speculative advantage—which would however, I still think, be a practical disadvantage—over the competing notion of a growing world. But as a matter of fact the effort by philosophy to rationalize the notion of the non-temporal has so far been a total failure. Meanwhile I think that the most serious drawback to the alternative doctrine is in connection, not with novelty as such, but with novelty in kind or quality. I have myself to confess to a very strong intellectual repugnance to the idea of a world in which realities of an entirely new *sort* suddenly emerge, which in no sense were there before; though even here I see no strict impossibility in the notion, and am not

certain therefore that I may not be forcing a prejudice of mine upon the universe.

But the conception has no need to suppose such a thing as novelty in *kind*. All the sorts of being that reality presents may well be eternally present in God's life and consciousness. The analogy most natural to the case is not in terms of the growing child who, starting from a vague and almost contentless experience, progressively discovers more and more about himself and the surrounding world, but rather of the full-grown man who in the life of social experience creates new *values* on the foundation of what may be a relative fixity of knowledge and character, through the changing conditions of his intercourse with his fellows. That, given the presence of value as an aspect of the world, the expanding life of conscious beings in relation to common ends should be the possible source of a constant renewal of satisfaction in changing forms, is not only what experience tells us does actually take place, but it seems a very natural sort of thing, especially since without it an overwhelming monotony would apparently invade the spiritual life.

And I see no reason to deny to God the same progressive enjoyment of changing values which is needed to constitute value itself in the long run. This no doubt involves with each new step a growth in knowledge also. But it is a knowledge not about new kinds of existents, but, primarily, about the possible relationships that present existences in-

volve. And there seems to be no necessity that all such possibilities should at any moment anywhere be actual even for God, or that God should be any less divine through his failure to include them in his conscious life. In fact the disadvantage is on the other side. Thus it has often been felt as a real objection, from the ethical and aesthetic sides at least, to an absolutist philosophy, that it supposes all possible relationships—the trivial and silly as well as the significant, the unpleasant and ignoble as well as the noble—eternally present in the divine mind; to say nothing of the intolerable sense of infinite complexity and confusion which this carries for human thinking.

Granting, then, a community of selves already in existence, the interplay of their lives might supply, it would seem, a fund of novelty not especially hard for the mind to acquiesce in. Meanwhile the emergence of the members of this community themselves brings us back to an acuter form of the difficulty. But if we take the self in its empirical form at least, we have to offset the impossibility of understanding the *rationale* of its appearance by the undoubted fact that it *does* appear, and appear as something new. We can *call* it non-temporal; but this is a form of words only, and to it no more attaches in the way of a realizable meaning than to the notion of creation. Each new emergence of a conscious life has every appearance of being an actual accretion to the sum of things, which was not there before; and

in the absence of a competing explanation that really explains, I do not find it unreasonable to suppose that this represents the way the world is made.

And furthermore, if we could safely trust a conclusion already drawn in the preceding section, it might even be possible to add a logical justification of this attitude. The difficulty we feel here is due to the fact that we find ourselves asking *how* a human self is brought about, or "created"; and this supposes that a relation of causality is really present, though we cannot get an understanding of its nature. The only meaning I have been able to assign however to effective causality, is in terms of conscious motive; and the particular aspect of the situation now in question is apparently not such as to make applicable the explanation previously attempted. For here we have by hypothesis two separate existents, God and man, one of them supposed to be "caused" by the other; and this would involve just that notion of a subsistent being for the causal relation, falling somehow "between" existents, upon which the argument of the section was intended to throw doubt. On the showing of this argument, the question as to how selves can be created would be met, not by confessing our inability to frame an answer, but by a recognition that the question is one that ought not to be asked, since it makes use of a category which by definition is irrelevant to the particular situation we are dealing with.

What in other words this amounts to is, that there

are certain circumstances where the acceptance of the fact itself as its own explanation is our only recourse, without asking how or why. This attitude philosophers agree is in one case at least the only proper one; it is meaningless to ask how the universe itself is made. And I see no conclusive objection to supposing that, except for mental habits that interfere, there might be occasions where the attitude was justified in connection with particular portions of the world as well. What I should take to be a case in point is the fundamental fact of causality itself, in the humanistic sense in which I have attempted to define it. Purposive activity within experience, with its links of intelligible connection, we in a real measure understand; we know just *what* it is, because we live through it many times a day. Yes, it may be rejoined; but we do not know *how* such a process works, in terms of its causal machinery, and so we do not really understand it after all. But why is not a "what" enough? Since we know also *that* it is, why should not its peculiar nature be accepted as in so far a final revelation of the nature of reality itself, without going on to ask another why, especially since this "why" has been allowed by most philosophers to have no meaning except in terms of a further "that"? And just as we may be held to have no right to ask for the causal explanation of an experience which by definition stands for the very meaning of causality, so we would appear similarly to have no right to ask for a causal explanation in

the case of any actual collocations in the world of fact where the definition we have accepted cannot be made to apply; we must take these for what they are, as among the ultimate data through which we discover what the universe is like. Meanwhile I should not like to be understood as resting too heavily on such a dialectical consideration; for I cannot deny that our natural propensity to demand a causal "why" here is very strong.

To the more general question involved in a theory of time, I have nothing to add to what has been already said. The acceptance of the temporal character of reality seems to me necessary not only to save human values, but speculatively necessary also if we are to find for our words about the nature of the concrete world a definite and intelligible meaning. The moment I try to reduce time to a logical category in an eternal and unchanging universe, that moment I am forced to abandon outright my everyday descriptions; and since I am not recompensed for the loss by an increase of intelligibility, I hesitate to make the exchange. Meanwhile I may repeat that, when I speak of the infinity of time, I am not inclined to regard time as an entity or receptacle. I mean simply that there exist no limits to the possibility of new experience. I confess however that this as a reply to difficulties is much more relevant to the future than to the past. God's consciousness of what is still to come may be, I think, as ours is, no consciousness of an actual eternity, but only of

an absence of finality in any values at any time achieved. But I do not know how this could be applied to God's awareness of the past, since here human experience does not help us out. *We* are able to look back on a beginning. But God cannot think a time when he was not, and still be God; and how he could combine a present realization of his full nature with an endless past, I am unable to imagine any way of conceiving.

One objection still remains to the hypothesis which I have been considering—perhaps on the whole the most serious of all. Even apart from the insistent facts of suffering and evil, the world of nature in the concrete presents to our natural mind a brute and non-moral character which we shall probably hesitate to connect too closely with the notion of God in its religious meaning. I think indeed that the feeling of positive repugnance here may be exaggerated, and often is exaggerated; a part of the current indictment against the cruelty of nature reveals a bias of prejudice that is no more to be applauded than a similar prejudice on the other side. I shall however not attempt to meet the issue, partly because the problem of evil is too large to manage in this connection, and in part because I am distrustful of the amount of success I should attain.

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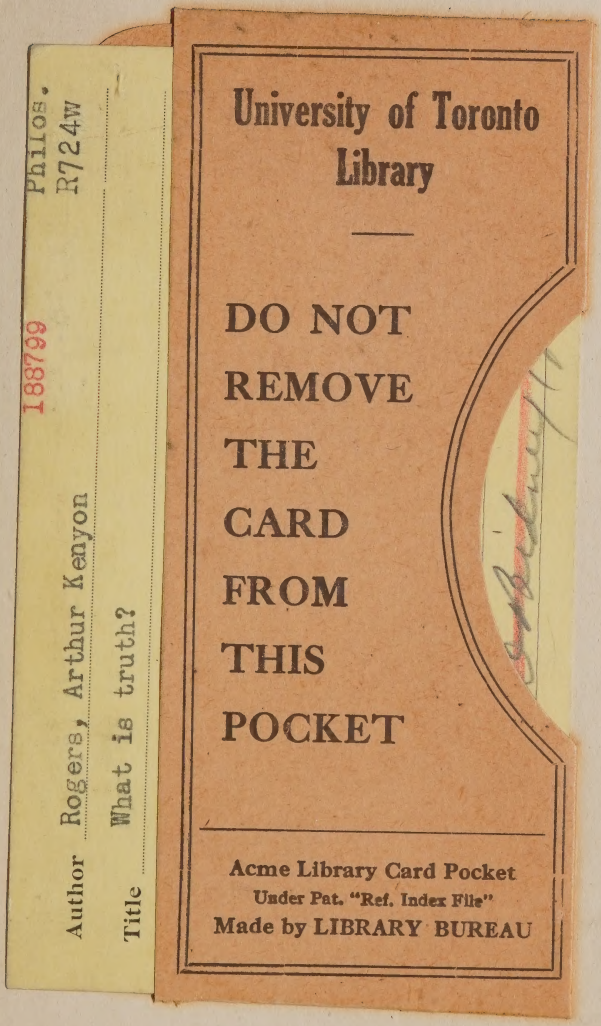
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